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elcome to a very special issue of Hit Parader... The Kings of Metal! A few months ago, we presented another special issue. The Encyclopedia of Metal, in which we provided snippets of info about literally hundreds of bands from throughout hard rock's glorious history. This time around, we thought we'd go to the opposite extreme, presenting huge, detailed features and interviews highlighting only the most important and influential groups in the annals of metal. They're all here from AC/DC to Zeppelin, with all the expected heroes in between. So please enjoy this special *Hit Parader* salute to the true royalty of rock... The Kings of Metal.

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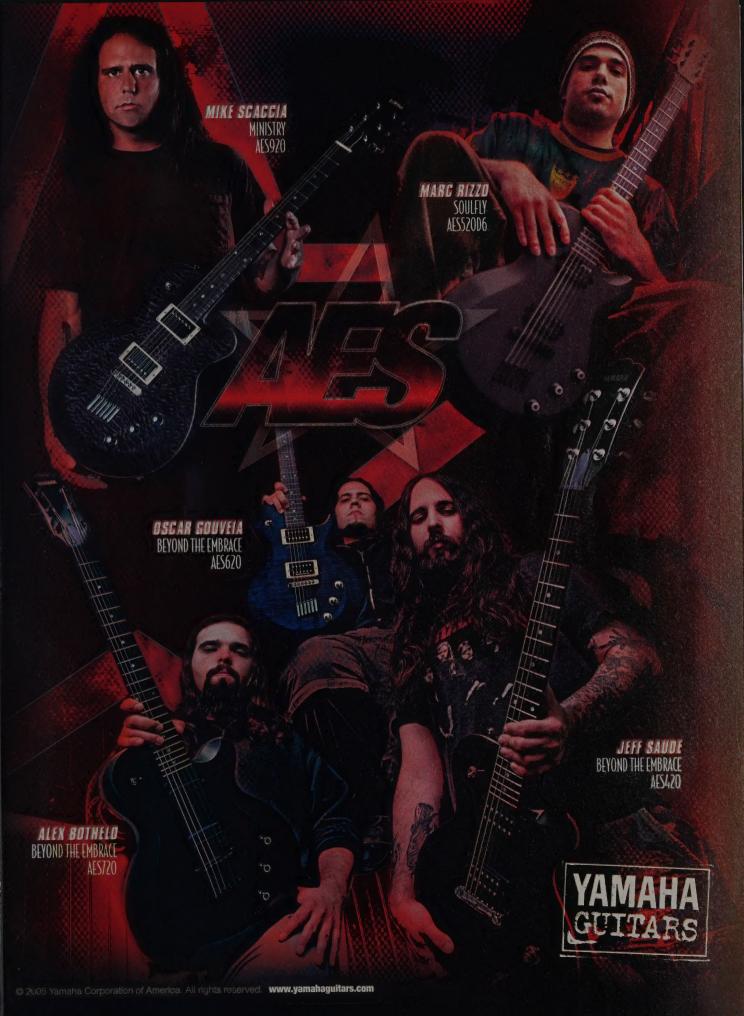
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#### **ENCYLO BLABBER**

Gotta be honest with you. I don't often pick up Hit Parader in order to learn things. I'd rather save all the "education" for the school room. But your special issue was one of the most educational AND entertaining mags I've ever read. There was more info crammed into your pages than I could possibly absorb... and a lot of what was said was really funny too! So thanks for all the good work, and I can't wait for Vol. II. Monty

San Antonio, TX

Wow! Your Encyclopedia of Heavy Metal really rocked. I especially liked all the "classic" photos of bands I had totally forgotten about. I was a major metal head back in the mid-'80s, so seeing the likes of Tuff, Jetboy and White Lion again brought back a lot of really cool memories. Brenda Ft. Lauderdale, FL

I really wish you had focused more on contemporary acts in your Encyclopedia of Heavy Metal. Do you think that most of your readers really care about bands that were popular 10, 20 or even 30 years ago? We buy Hit Parader to learn about what's happening today and tomorrow in the hard rock world. While I applaud your efforts.

I think you

that one.

Jerry

lost track on

Atlanta, GA Hey dudes... I loved your Encyclopedia of Heavy Metal, but maybe next times you'll come up with something really cool, like the Encyclopedia of Ridiculous Hard Rock Hair Styles. Just looking at some of those 15-year-old photos made me realize that a lot of the people who I thought looked really cool at the time actually looked kind of lame.

Colorado Springs, CO

thrust under their noses. Opie Rocky Mount, TN

I just want everyone at Hit Parader to know that as I write this I'm staring at a wall

covered completely with Slipknot photos and posters— most of which have come from your recent issues. I think I can safely speak for the millions-and-millions of Knot fans out there when I say to keep 'em coming, we can't get enough Slipknot! Karen Costa Mesa, CA

Hello...HELLO!!! Is there anybody listening? If you are then please heed my advice; enough with the Slipknot already! I mean I don't mind a little bit of madness from time to time, but to see those hideous masked faces on

virtually every magazine cover you put out tests the bounds of sanity... don't you think? How about a little more attention for Velvet Revolver and Judas Priest? Dick

Flagstaff, AZ

I went to see Slipknot on their latest tour. and you know what? They were great, but I thought Lamb of God and Shadows Fall stole the show. The reason I say that is those bands seem to let their music come first... with a minimum of theatrics. Slipknot, on the other hand, relies too much on their outrageous look to get the crowd going. The ironic part is that I recall reading how their masks and coveralls were supposed to make everyone focus on the music rather than on the way any individual in the band looked. But the net effect is just the opposite. Joseph Wheeling, WV

FAST RISING "UNDERGROUND"

I love how heavy metal reinvents itself every few years. Just as the so-called New Metal Revolution begins to run out of steam, the Metal Underground arises to be heard by







North American tour is sold out. But

you'd think that rock radio, and MTV

would give this band a lot more atten-

recognize Star Quality, even when it's

tion. I guess some people just can't

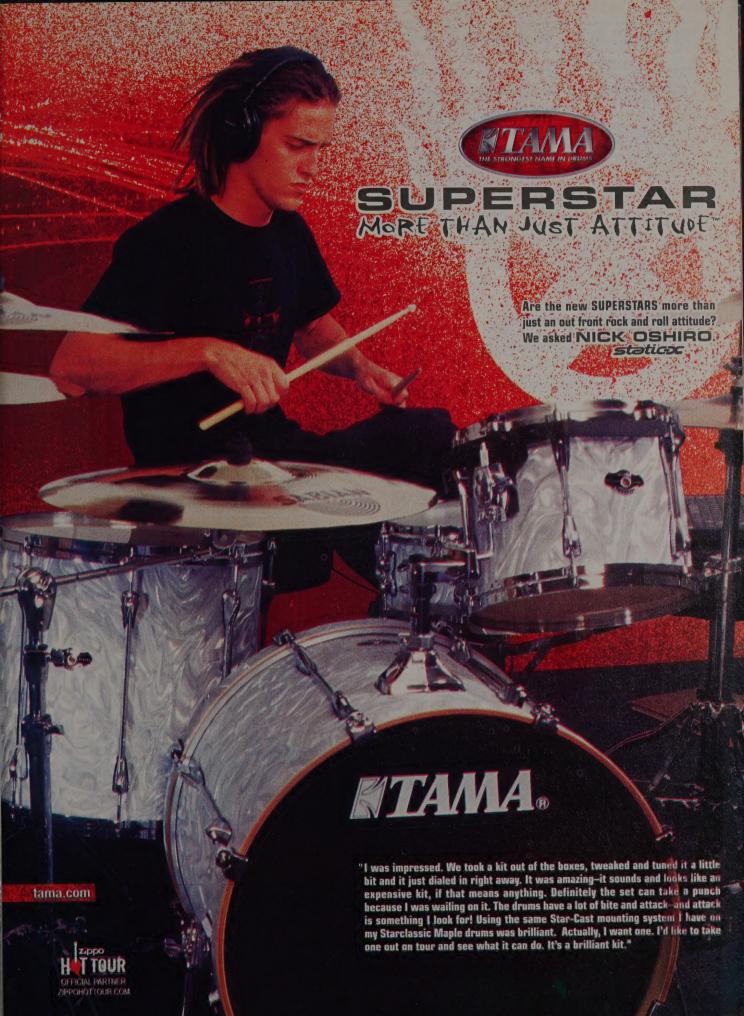
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# WE READ YOUR WALL

all. And thanks to great publications like yours, fans around the world have been made very aware that there's a new sound afoot, and that we'd better get ready for the next metal onslaught which is already well underway.

Walter Springfield, MA

It's very interesting that you people at
Hit Parader have finally deemed the Metal
Underground worthy of your attention—
after bands like Lamb of God and
Shadows Fall have been struggling for
years. Can you say Trend Jumpers???
You could have been providing some editorial support a few years ago for
Mastodon, Atreyu and countless other "underground" bands in place of your interminable
features on Staind, Adema and Powerman
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Wilks
Chicago.IL

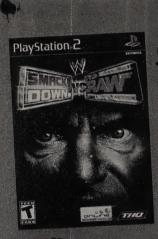
Now that you have begun recognizing bands on independent labels, perhaps you should take the next step and *really* start focusing on the important new bands in the metal realm. It's fine that you've begun focusing your media-inspired attentions on Lacuna Coil, Hatebreed and Meshuggah, but what about get-



ting behind some of the truly important bands of the decade like Killswitch Engage and Avenged Sevenfold? Trust me, you won't mind a bit. Mark Ottawa, Canada

The chick in Lacuna Coil is really pretty. I don't know anything about her or the band's music, but it would be cool if you kept running full-page photos of her. That's what rock needs right now—more pretty faces.
P.L.

Staten Island, NY



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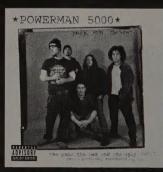
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-Spider





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itos by. Chad Lee - Jack Nau @ EMG 2005



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"On this leg of the tour, we have brought out a few songs that we haven't played very often in recent years," Ulrich explained prior to taking the stage. "We've played The Unforgiven a few times recently, and that's something we haven't done in about a decade. And there are others things, especially from the Garage Inc. album, that we've decided to play. We don't really have an album to promote on this tour, so it's allowed us a great deal of freedom with the

"You'd think we'd be beyond surprises at this point in our career.

Following as it does hot-on-the-heels of one of the band's most tempestuous and well-documented periods (thanks to the incredible "rockumentary" **Some Kind of Monster**), Metallica's *Madly In Anger With the World* tour has not only helped bring the band back to prominence, but it's proven all-over-again that the Metallimen remain America's greatest heavy metal band. With Trujillo providing musical and emotional stability (his bass solo was a concert highlight), the group's sound has rarely before been as fueled, focused or powerful. Indeed, the clean and sober Hetfield seems more like a caged lion on stage these days than a family-oriented rocker well into his 40s. And Ulrich, who in recent years has discussed the ever-growing rigors of the road, seems even more impassioned than on previous tours as he flails at his massive drum kit with reckless abandon.

"I've heard people call this tour a 'rebirth' for Metallica," Ulrich said in the band's surprisingly quiet post-shows dressing room. "But I don't know if I'd go quite that far. I understand that mind-set— we are a different band with Robert aboard and James being as focused as he is. But when we're on stage we're still the same band we've

always been... except maybe we're a little better!'

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"We faced the line of fire and we survived the ordeal."

They—and we all know who they are—always say that things are different the second time around. And you probably won't get the members of Vendetta Red to dispute such a claim. As this young Seattle-based heavy metal outfit get ready to unleash their second major label disc. Sisters of the Red Death, they know that the lessons and experiences that characterized their initial run through the rock world will certainly serve them in good stead this time around. That debut, highlighted by the positive response afforded the band's break-out disc, Between The Never and the Now, didn't always go exactly as planned for vocalist Zachary Davidson, guitarist Erik Chapman, drummer Joseph Lee

Childres, guitarist Justin Cronk and bassist Mike Vermillion. But the cumulative effect of opportunities ranging from opening for bands like AC/DC and Chevelle to headlining their own club run have all unquestionably made this quintet a better, wiser and

stronger unit in 2005.

"You grow as a band every day," Davidson said. "If you don't, you might as well pack it in. We had so many incredible experiences since the last album came out, and all of those went into the writing for Sisters of the Red Death. We faced the line of fire and we survived the ordealand prospered from it. The old saving is that what doesn't kill you will make you stronger, and we're living proof of that. I mean we were the

band chosen to open for AC/DC the night before their Hall of Fame ceremony. That's quite an honor. But the people who came to the show that night didn't want to see us. They were vicious. But we accepted the challenge and even eventually won them over. That's the heart of Vendetta Red.

The lesson-under-fire gleaned from their harsh AC/DC experience has apparently served the members of Vendetta Red quite well. But that eve-opening on-stage encounter wasn't the first difficult hurdle this unit has had to face during their seven-year career. From the time they formed back in 1998 and began their musical lives by hitting the various legendary musical watering holes that dot the Seattle

now-traditional indie releases, 2000's Blackout Analysis and 2001's White Knuckled Substance. And this unit contentedly played low-band-on-thetotem-pole at events including The Warped Tour and Europe's prestigious Reading Festival. But each and every one of these experiences served to add extra dimensions of power and passion to this group's music, a fact put loudly and proudly on display by the time Between The Never and the Now heralded their major label arrival back in 2003. And now with Sisters of the Red Death, this band once again shows that their guitar-powered, multi-layered, highly-infectious sound appears destined to soon make them a big-time force on

#### "We've grown so much as a band since our first album came out."

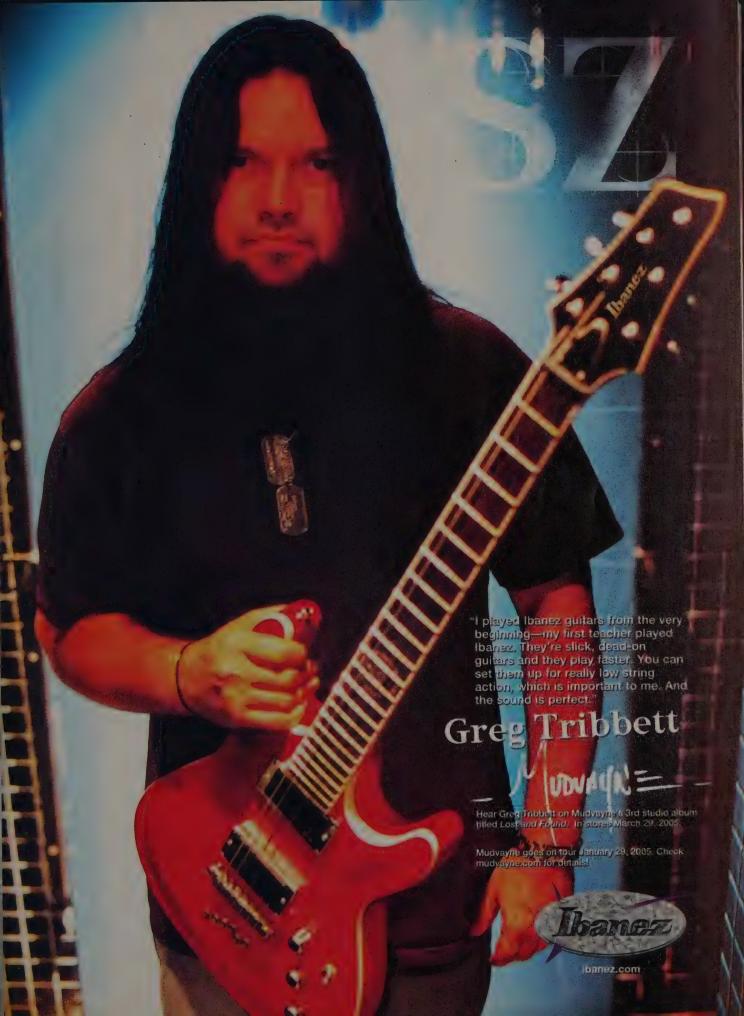
rock and roll landscape, the VR boys have faced their share of setbacks and hardships. It all kind'a goes with the territory of being a band that plays by its own musical rules - a group whose sound flas been compared to everyone from U2 to Led Zeppelin... and just about every other unconventional band in-between.

"We write good songs and we try to present them in an interesting manner," Davidson matter-of-factly stated. "We're the kind of band that gives you an honest, all-we've-got kind of show when you come to see us. We pour our hearts into every song we write. We don't hold anything back. We've paid our dues and done things the right way... I think.'

The "right way" for Vendetta Red included the by-

the contemporary music scene.

"When you work for seven years to accomplish your goal, you can look back and say that it wasn't easy... but that it was definitely worth it," Davidson said. "But the good thing is that we've developed a solid following around the country, and we've done it our way. We don't fit into any category with our music. We'll be the first to admit that it's an odd mix of ingredients. But the underlying power and feeling is there in all the songs, and as long as those emotions reach out and touch everyone who hears our album or comes out to see us live, we'll be very happy."





## "We're all about writing; the songs mean everything to us."

When someone in a major band singles you out, marks you for stardom, and then places his own resources behind you, two things become instantly apparent; you've got a lot of talent... and you've ot a lot of pressure resting on your shoulders. That's the exact situation in which the New Yorkbased hard rock band Bloodsimple recently found themselves. But rather than being intimidated by the notion that Mudvayne's vocalist Chad Gray had chosen them to be the first signing on his new Billygoat Records label, vocalist Tim Williams, guiarist Mike Kennedy, bassist Kyle Sanders and drummer Chris Hamilton seemed to take it all in

You see, while Bloodsimple may be a new band to the eyes and ears of many, the hard rocking pedigree of the band's members runs deep into the pages of recent music history. Both Williams and Kennedy were members of the quasi-leg-endary East Coast hardcore band Vision of Disorder, while the unit's other members per-formed with an array of underground metal forces ranging from Skrew to Downset to Medication. But it wasn't until these four rockers joined forces n 2002, and began to carve their own unique place in the contemporary music pantheon, that the true nature of Bloodsimple began to become readily apparent.

"Bloodsimple opened a show for Mudvayne last year, and I was immediately blown away," Gray aid. "They had everything you look for in a said. "They had everything you look for in a band—great songs, great playing and a lot of onstage energy. They had the audience eating out of the palm of their hand by the time they left the stage, and I know as well as anyon're a young band. I figured they'd be the perfect type of group to halp launch Pilly group Reports, which is the full. to help launch Billygoat Records, which is the fulfillment of a dream for me. I've always wanted to do this; it's a great way for me to help friends and worthy musicians. Hopefully I can help them avoid some of the mistakes that I made early in my

Combining Gray's knowledge with the first-hand ock and roll experience the likes of Williams and Kennedy had already garnered has already provid-

ed Bloodsimple with more-than-enough "insider" music biz info. Now it's time for the band to transform all that information into some great music. Indeed, the band recently completed work on their first disc for Billygoat with noted producer Gggarth Richardson, whose own previous studio experiences with the likes of Rage Against The Machine, Mudvayne and Chevelle adds yet another all-knowing voice to Bloodsimple's musical mix. But despite the wide-ranging sources of inspira-tion that surrounded them, Williams knows that at day's end it's gonna be up to the members of Bloodsimple themselves to decide whether their band makes it... or breaks it in the music world.

We're all about writing; the song means everything to us," the singer said. "That's what drew Mike and I together in the first place. Originally we brought in another friend of ours and cranked out a four-song demo, just to see what it would sound like and how people would react. It was only after that happened that we decided to add Chris and Kyle, and with them aboard Bloodsimple really began to take shape. Off the strength of our first few songs, we got a lot of great touring opportuni-ties, and one of those led to Chad seeing us and asking us to be the first band he signed to Billygoat."

It has certainly been an active time for Bloodsimple. Tours opening for the likes of Biohazard, Anthrax and the aforementioned Mudvayne have already introduced this unit's rough and ready sound to the metal masses. But the band knows it will be their forthcoming album that will hopefully push everything over the top. Rallying around Williams' explosive vocal timbre and Kennedy's rugged guitar riffs, Bloodsimple feel that they've got the goods, as well as the backing, to make a significant dent on the metal world of 2004... and beyond!

"Having the chance to get into the studio and bring all of our ideas to life has been great for us," Williams said. "All the support we've already received has been great, but now it's our turn to Biohazard, Anthrax and the aforementioned

received has been great, but now it's our turn to show that all of that encouragement has been



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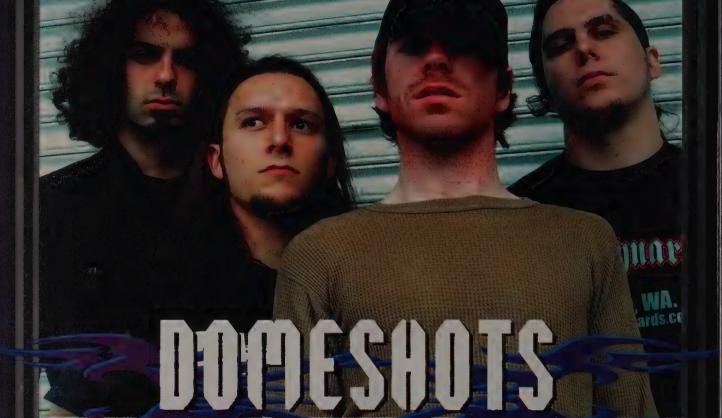
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When you mention the city of San Francisco in a heavy metal context, the name of only one band springs instantly to mind—the one-and-only Metallica. And while the members of Bay Area rockers Domeshots know that they've got quite a job on their hands, this determined unit is gonna do their best to get their names noticed among their glorious town's new generation of metal masters. The hard rock legacy that Metallica has left in their wake has had an understandable impact upon every SF band that's come down the pike over the last two decades. They sense it in every club they perform. They feel it in every local bar and dive. They hear it reflected in the programming of local radio stations. And while vocalist Dan Alexander, guitarist Jim Seishas, bassist Eric Tamo and drummer David Criss will openly acknowledge the role that the Metalli-men have played in shaping every Bay Area band's musical perspectives, they're also quick to add that this is one unit determined to

cut their own path through the hard rock jungle.

"Any band that grew up in San Francisco playing this kind of music has obviously been impacted by Metallica in some way."

Alexander said. "If they denied that they'd just be fooling themselves. But that doesn't mean that a band can't create their own style. That's one thing that we've worked very hard to do, and I think we've accomplished that goal. We have a lot of traditional heavy metal influences going on, but we're very much a 21st Century band."

As shown throughout Domoshots' cleverly titled debut disc, **Self-Titled**, this is a band quite confident in their own attitudes and opinions— despite their relatively brief time in the rock and roll spotlight. Formed in the late '90s, the band slowly-but-surely got to work writing material and then hitting the tour trail. Word of the group's incendiary live shows reached some major industry ears, thanks in part to the group landing highly prestigious

gigs at venues such as the Viper Room in L.A., and their home towa's logendary Fillmore. While the major labels remained oblivious to Domeshots' musical charms, major booking companies did not— a fact that helped the band secure a virtually non-stop road regimen throughout 2003, where they toured with the likes of Mudvayne, Kittie and Testament. By year's end the group felt confident enough to enter the recording studio to lay down the blistering tracks that now comprise Self-Titled.

"One lesson we learned very early is that you can't sit back and wait for things to happen," Alexander said. "You've got to go out and make them happen as best you can. We knew that we had to be aggressive, especially since the kind of music we were playing wasn't exactly being gobbled up by record labels. We were happy to take on a very hands-on, 'do it yourself' attitude, and that's carried over from the stage to this album."

Throughout their disc, Domeshots prove themselves to be a band capable of delivering the metal muscle... and do it with a somewhat surprising degree of rock and roll imagination. While at times this unit may stick a little to closely to tried-and-true metal formulas, at other moments their music soars on propulsive beats and from-the-gut vocal deliveries. Through their diverse and often scintillating approach, this power-packed quartet display a razor-edged sensibility for tight song construction and dynamic instrumental interplay, with the resultant musical mix brimming with an almost palpable electricity. Now the Domeshots boys want to take their hard rockin' musical message to the world.

"Our goal has always been to reach as many fans as possible," Alexander said. "And it doesn't matter to us whether we do that by playing clubs every night, or by getting a break and jumping on a bigger tour. We're the most determined bunch you'll ever meet, and we figure that might work to our favor in the business."

16 HIT PARADER







# Front Pages

ON DEADLINE: WE ARE AS shocked and stunned as any person walking the earth. We are referring, of course, to the assassination late last year of Dimebag Darrell Abbott in Columbus, Ohio.

A crazed "fan" not only killed the former lead guitarist for metal-masters Pantera, but took three poor souls with him before Sgt. Brent Mull of the Columbus police ended the slaughter when he dispatched 25 year old Nathan Gale before the rampaging maniac could kill any more. And, our confidential sources insist Gale was ready to take as many additional lives as he could

many additional lives as he could.

Metal will miss Dimebag sorely as besides being one of rock's top players, he was a terrific guy as well. He died far too young at 38. When reached by the men and women of the Fourth Estate, Dimebag's pal and contemporary, Corey Taylor, of Slipknot said, "I lost a really good friend on my 31st birthday. Dimebag was the kind of guy you could hang out with for two seconds and feel like you knew him your whole life. He made you laugh, made you drink, but most of all, made you feel special. I'm really really going to miss him, but the one thing we will always have is his music."

COMMENT: We've always liked and admired Darrell from his earliest days with Pantera and there is nothing we can say except we shall never forget the happiness he brought us. Adieu old friend.

OUICKIE OUIZ: Last month, we asked you the following question. We all know Marilyn Manson's real name is Brian Warner, but... what is his real middle name? Correct ans: Hugh. How many of you knew that one? A free CD goes out to our winner, Wei Wei Liu of Queens, New York for being on-themoney. This month, name the one state in fifty that "enjoys" the highest percentage of adults missing all their natural teeth? We'll give you a hint: The state is a Commonwealth and is definitely located in the backwoods. Please, we can say no more.

NO NAMES PLEEZE: Is the Central Intelligence Agency "torturing" top-level Iraqi thugs by playing classic Twisted Sister tunes at Mega-levels at least 18 hours per day? Our embedded moles are impeccable on this one! One could quickly see where the ruthless rats would rapidly become totally disoriented!!! It's all about Osama! You can't make this stuff up!

ROCK WIRE REPORT: It's true, 2005 is just getting started but the tour to see is the Subliminal Verses campaign which just began last month. Starring the sensational Slipknot, Lamb Of God and Shadows Fall. SV is a must see for anyone who cares about metal. Beg a ticket for this one. It's

sure to be a mind-blower. For the record, Corey Taylor and his friends will be crisscrossing America thru May 2nd. Trust your ancient scribbler and get there!!!



A special Happy Birthday wish to our buddy. Mick Mars of the Motley Crue. Mick rings up the big 50 on the fourth of April. FLASH: It's a crazy world, ain't it? Exactly one year ago in this very space your veteran snoop made a fearless prediction. Yes, in April. 2004 we told you that all four original members of the Crue would get back together for a reunion tour. Well, the aforementioned Mick Mars, Nikki Sixx, Vince Neil and Tommy Lee are back out on-the-road even as you read these words. Our moles whisper it's a raucous, wild barnburner that's got to be seen to be believed. Tip to parents: Lock your pretty teenage daughters in the basement until the Crue finish the mayhem!...What "teetotaling" rock star who "never" touches a drop was discovered naked and unconscious in his hotel suite with the mini-bar totally empty? His wife went ultra-whack-a-ding-hoy when she saw the damage her hubby had inflicted on the room. Naturally, they hushed it up with—you guessed it—money.

OVER 'N' OUT: Motorhead had to have the bodies spinning in their graves when the band rocked at London's Royal Opera House. It's the first time in HISTORY that a heavy-metal band has been permitted to perform at the prestigious Covent Garden venue. Veteran headbangers know, of course, that Motorhead is the world's loudest band according to the Guinness Book of Records. The Royals must have been apoplectic!... Are the traditional music stores we've been going to all our lives about to disappear because of rampant Internet larceny? That means you! At least Hollywood learned from the music business's billion \$ bungle. Try to copy a DVD some time and you can't because of top-secret encryption technology. Hmmm...

CORRECTION: On page 72 of our April issue, we ran a great photo of a smiling Dimebag Darrell as part of our "We Remember Dimebag" feature. For whatever reason, that photo wasn't credited. It was taken by CHAD LEE.

## THE METAL GODS ARE BACK



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# 111 711 All Hail The Kings

BY ROB ANDREWS

n 2005 Led Zeppelin rank as the most lauded, applauded and appreciated hard rock band of all time. They stand as the Metal Kings—the barometer against which all pretenders to their guitar-driven throne must be measured. In look, sound and execution Zeppelin remain the ultimate example of all that is great about rock and roll... but it was not always so!

As hard as it may be to believe, when Led Zeppelin released their selftitled debut album in the winter of 1968, many in the music press absolutely *hated* it. Great expectations had been held for this "new" creation by former Yardbirds guitarist Jimmy Page, but when **Led Zeppelin** 

emerged, it was labeled as everything from "derivative" to "bombastic" to "arrogant". In truth, it was all that and more. What Page, vocalist Robert Plant, drummer John (Bonzo) Bonham and bassist John Paul Jones had managed to accomplish was the rock and roll equivalent of reinventing the wheel. They had taken musical styles, attitudes and approaches as old as music itself and turned those ancient formulas inside out. By taking old blues licks by greats like Willie Dixon and Robert Johnson, adding their own artistic flavorings and then simply amplifying the whole melange beyond the point of immediate recognition, Zeppelin had created an entirely new musical form.

What those short-sighted critics had labeled as "unimaginative" quickly proved to be just the opposite; it was the perfect musical style with which to herald rock's new age. It was loud, it was brash, it was the opiate of the masses. Perhaps more than anything else, it was Led Zeppelin.

"I remember the first time we all got together," Jones stated. "We met in an old London rehearsal room and we had quite a bit of our gear set up in there. I knew Jimmy from some of our session work, most notably with Donovan. I had met Robert and Bonzo briefly before that. So these four relative strangers got together one evening, plugged in their instruments and started to jam. I remember Jimmy saying to me to 'just play a blues beat'. The song we went into was an old Yardbirds number, Train Kept A'Rolling, and I remember the whole room just exploding with sound. You couldn't wipe the smiles off our faces for a week."

From their tumultuous early days, it didn't take Zeppelin long to establish themselves as the preeminent rock and roll band on the planet. Back in the late '60s it took a little longer for a band to develop a following; after all, MTV was still a dozen years from becoming a reality and even

the then-infant FM radio format was somewhat resistant to play what they viewed as overly raucous music. The only way a band could get heard was the "old fashioned way"—by going directly to the people on never-ending world tours. Such was the path that Zeppelin took, opening shows for anyone brave enough to have them on their tour, including such bands as Iron Butterfly and Country Joe and the Fish. But it didn't take Zep long to blossom from "support act" status to headliners, and by the time their second disc, Led Zeppelin II, was released in late '69, the world was already their oyster.

'Things moved incredibly smoothly for us," Page recalled. "We had a

manager, Peter Grant, who was able to make things happen. And it was our belief that once we had the chance to play in front of an audience we could win them over. About the only problem we had in the early days was when the Countess Von Zeppelin saw the cover of our first album and almost made us change our name. But by the time the second album came out. I think we all sensed that nothing could stop us.

No one had ever heard anything like Led Zeppelin's late '60s albums. In an age when loosely structured 20minute jams were standard operating procedure, Zeppelin's hard-hitting

bursts of pure rock energy were like a call-to-arms for a generation. Filled with lusty tales of love, and conquest, and featur-

PHOTO: FRANK WHITE

ing the most intense instrumental attack ever heard, such early Zeppelin masterworks as *Communication Breakdown, Whole Lotta Love* and *Good Times, Bad Times*, were revolutionary in both concept and design. Perhaps only the Beatles, working in a radically different musical format, had as big an impact on their chosen style of rock as Zeppelin had on theirs. By the time their second album finished its meteoric path to the top of the charts, Zeppelin found themselves to be the hottest act in the world—the largest grossing concert attraction in rock history.

world—the largest grossing concert attraction in rock history, "We stayed on the road almost continually when the first two albums came out," Plant said. "I think we had completed five complete American tours by the end of 1969! In retrospect it's amazing that we even survived that ordeal. But the fact is that we loved every second of it."

Indeed they did, and as they spent time on the road, Zeppelin was establishing precedents that *every* future rock act would attempt to emulate. Their dealings with groupies, the hotel-destroying exploits and the dabbling in all manner of bizarre substances quickly became the stuff of legend. The tales have been passed down from generation to generation



"People always ask me if we all sensed that Stairway was something special while we were working on it. To be honest, the answer is no."

20 HIT PARADER

PHOTO: FRANK WHITE



with code words like "mud shark" or "plaster caster" gaining instant grins of recognition from those in-the-know. It was a lascivious lifestyle in a era before AIDS turned such activities into human games of Russian roulette. As Plant recalls, in their heyday, life was a never-ending party for Led Zeppelin that only ended when they prepared to go on stage each

night.
"We were young, and we were healthy, and all manner of temptation was being placed at our feet," he said. "There was never even a thought

of resistance. It was all part of the world we were totally caught up within.

Following the chaos created by their constant recording and touring schedules during their first two years, the band took a short vacation before recording their historic next album, Led Zeppelin III. That was the disc that began showing the band's growth, the evolutionary steps that would soon turn Zep's calling card from that of The Kings Of Bombast to the masters of all musical forms. For those who had come to expect the three-chord riffs that characterized those initial recordings, the more cerebral, controlled approach used on songs like Gallows Pole and That's The Way was something of a shock. But when criticism came their

way, expressing "concern" that Zeppelin had grown soft, Page could only giggle at the notion. "We had time to think about what we were doing for the third

album," he said. "We really didn't have that luxury before. We wanted to expand and see what we could do. It wasn't a conscious decision on our part, it was just a natural development."

Despite III's differing approach, the Zeppelin juggernaut continued on unabated. Their tours continued to gross more and more money, and their albums became instant best sellers. It was as if the band could do no wrong. But the pressures of competing with himself were beginning to get to Page. Always a brilliant businessman as well as a rock historian, the dark haired guitarist realized that he had been handed a unique opportunity to make a musical statement for the ages. While on the road in Japan he set about creating a song that would serve as his crowning musical creation, the song that Led Zeppelin would be remember for through the ages. When Zeppelin finally reentered the studio to record their next disc, the quixotic album that has come to be known as **ZOSO**, he felt ready to lay down that song. At first it was little more than a series of disjointed musical movements with a building crescendo of instruments. After weeks of work it became more streamlined and focused. And when the recording was completed, it was known as Stairway To Heaven.

'People always ask me if we all sensed that Stairway was something special while we were working on it," Jones said. "To be honest, the answer is no. We all knew that Jimmy was working on something special, and we had heard snippets of song parts, but we didn't know how they would fit together. Once we heard what we had created when the recording was finished we did know it was special. It was everything that Led Zeppelin was striving to be.'

With their legacy already firmly entrenched in rock history, Zeppelin set out to conquer new frontiers. During the early '70s the band members took increasingly long vacations away from each other, absorbing various cultures as they sojourned across the planet. One particularly open to new influences proved to be Plant, who began spending more and more time in such exotic ports-of-call as India and Morocco. Many of those influences popped up on the group's next album, Houses Of The Holy, one of the group's most complex and eclectic efforts. While some long-time fans bemoaned the group's apparent reliance on meandering song structures, numbers like The Rain Song seemed to take on a life of their own once they were performed on the concert stage

"Many of the songs served as a springboard on stage," Page related.

"There was no point in simply recreating the album versions when you played live. We wanted to expand them and see where they went. That was part of Zeppelin's live excitement. Nobody knew exactly what sounds would emerge that night—including us.

The hectic recording schedule that characterized the band's first five years began to change after Houses Of The Holy. It would be over two years before the group's next album, the two-record set, **Physical** . **Graffiti**, was released in Ma**rch**, 1975. But it wasn't as if the band's mem-

bers had taken a rest from the creative process. On each and every track of PG the imprint of artistic passion could be felteven if those efforts occasionally failed to hit the mark. At this point in their career, the last thing Zeppelin wanted to do was live off of past glories; their goal was to continually traverse new musical terrain, to follow the Star Trek credo of going where no band had gone before. On stage, the band was never better, with old and new material melding into a magical mix of rock reactants. Some of those special moments were captured at tour's end for the film The Song Remains The Same

I've always had mixed emotions about the movie," Plant said. "Parts are wonderful, others are somewhat overindulgent. But then there are those who will say that overindulgence is the

very definition of Led Zeppelin.

To follow that overindulgent bent, prior to beginning work on their next album, Presence, in 1976, Zeppelin decided to do something radical. They made the decision to start their own record label, Swan Song, and sign on a variety of friends and confidants including Roy Harper, Maggie Bell and Bad Company. Of course, the most important band on the Swan Song roster was Led Zeppelin, and with their own label behind

> them, the band decided to try their most experimental work on Presence. Much of the album's nomadic, uncentered feel is due to the fact that the band members worked mostly on their own during the writing process, with Plant recovering from an auto accident in California, and Page residing in a variety of places due to his newfound status as a British

Those were unusual times," Jones said. "Robert had suffered a horrendous auto crash, and we all were somewhat nomadic because of the tax question. All those elements flavored Presence, though I think the album had some outstanding moments.

It would be three years

until Led Zeppelin would reenter the recording studio with only the release of The Song Remains The Same movie—and its accompanying album soundtrack- to fill the void for Zep-o-philes. They did tour America in 1977, a road trek that was initially delayed due to Plant contracting a nasty case of tonsillitis and later cut short when the singer's young son, Karac, died of a mysterious stomach ailment. The rock press of the era went to great lengths trying to establish some sort of "Zeppelin Curse", hinting that Page's well-known fondness for the occult might be at the root of these "dark" situations. Of course, all this proved to be total rubbish, but when Bonham was to die four years later, talk of The Curse again reared its ugly head. Those 1977 tour dates would prove to be the band's last in America.

His son's death cast a pall of depression over Plant that lasted for the better part of two years. In fact, at times there was talk that Zeppelin's career was over due to both their singer's unwillingness to continue and Page's inability to kick his ever-increasing chemical dependencies. But, finally, by late 1978 the band once again gathered in Stockholm, Sweden







to begin work on their next album, **In Through The Out Door**. Due to the non-musical problems of his bandmates, Jones was more in control of the album than anyone else, and his diligence brought out the best in everyone. Working hard and fast, the entire recording process was completed in three weeks, and such tracks as *In The Evening* emerged as among the best in band history. But there were bad vibes abounding, though no one could place their finger on exactly what the problem was. Perhaps it was age, perhaps it was years of a decadent lifestyle, but those on the scene sensed that Led Zeppelin was headed for trouble.

"I don't know if we sensed anything other than that we were making new music and planning new tours," Jones said. "But we were older and had other responsibilities in our lives. It really was that simple."

In Through The Out Door was released in August, 1979, and the band soon played their first live shows in two years in Copenhagen, Denmark. Things seemed to be going well... amazingly well. The record proved to be a best-seller, receiving four-star reviews around the world, and talk of the band's first U.S. tour since their aborted 1977 trek was on everyone's lips. A full-scale European tour was launched in early 1980, with the band playing an intoxicating array of old and new material during a set that frequently ran over three hours in length. Fans everywhere rejoiced, and American Zep-heads, in particular, rejoiced when official State-side tour dates were announced.

That tour would never happen. On September 25, 1980, shortly after rehearsals for that American tour, Bonham started downing shots of vodka. It is estimated that he drank over 40 shots during a 12-hour stretch. He went home to his newly-purchased estate outside of London and went to sleep. He never woke up. The next day his body was discovered in his bed. Four months later, after much rumor and speculation, the surviving band members issued this brief statement:

"The loss of our dear friend, and the deep sense of harmony felt by ourselves and our manager, have led us to decide that we could not continue as we were."

Over the next decade, Led Zeppelin was never far from the forefront of fan interest. Their final album **Coda**, was released in 1982 and a "reunion" of sorts occurred in 1985 at *Live Aid*. Plant and Page remained active on the recording front with the former trying hard to avoid comparisons to the Zep legacy and the later trying just as hard to recapture it by creating Zep-inspired music with the likes of Paul Rogers and David Coverdale. Countless reunion stories filled the rock press over the years, but nothing ever seemed to even touch upon reality. At times it appeared as if Page and Plant, the unquestioned heart and soul of the band, weren't even in communication.

But then, in mid-1994, the reformation stories began to heat up again. Word began filtering out of London that Page and Plant were working together once more, playing with a variety of sidemen to see if they could indeed recapture the old magic. Needless to say, the incredible pay days then being enjoyed on the road by such veteran acts as the Rolling Stones and Pink Floyd served as financial motivation for the pair. But as Plant had long indicated, if new music wasn't involved, or at least a creative reworking of older material, he had no desire to be part of any new partnership with Page. Finally, historically, the two did get together to perform on MTV's *UnLEDed*, and release a disc, **No Quarter**, that

attempted to reinterpret Zep classics in an acoustic format—with decidedly mixed results. A tour followed which delighted Zeppelin fans—though the Page/Plant partnership steadfastly refused to invoke the hallowed Led Zeppelin name or even invite Jones to take part, much to the bassist's chagrin. But rather than quenching fan hunger for Zeppelin, the brief tour only seemed to feed the flames of public

"I had stayed in touch with Robert over the years," Page stated. "We simply wanted to find the right means of working together again. I believe that's exactly what we've done."

For much of the next decade, little seemed to occur on the Zeppelin front. The band's three surviving members kept their rock and roll profiles low... but active. With each passing day, the desire for a full-scale, full-blast Zep reunion



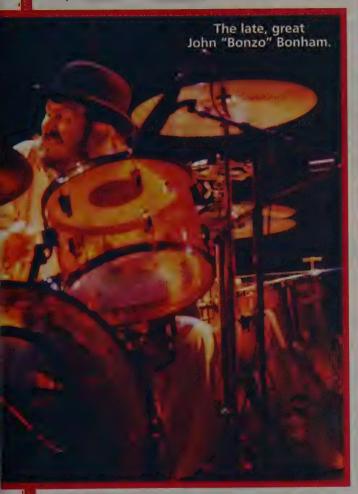
seemed to grow—too often falling on deaf ears. Then in 2003, rumors again began to filter through the rock wires that Page and Plant were "considering" a small-scale Zeppelin tour to go along with the release of their massive live Led Zeppelin DVD set and How the West Was Won CD package. The mere thought that Page, Plant, and Jones (linked in the media with drummer Jason Bonham, son of "Bonzo") might again be making music was enough to send thrills and chills racing down the spine of rock fans everywhere. The thought that Led Zeppelin could actually return to active duty was enough to spin most hard rock mavens into fits of pure metallic frenzy. Unfortunately, after "milking" such interest for all they could in order to stimulate reaction to their latest projects, the band's members merely scoffed at the notion of ever performing together again.

"Honestly, it was never discussed by any of us," Jones said. "We heard what others were saying, but we didn't know who had started it."

For some long-time rock and roll fans it may be hard to believe that more than two-and-a-half decades have now passed since Led Zeppelin presented their last in-concert performance. During the 25 year span that has elapsed since the hallowed unit gave up the prover-

bial ghost, the musical legacy created by this quintessential British heavy metal machine has continued to grow at an amazing and previously unprecedented rate. Back catalog sales for the group's original albums continue to move over two million copies a year (topped only by the Beatles), and various compilations of the Mighty Zep's "greatest hits" rank high among the most successful boxed-set presentations in history.

Indeed, with the steady barrage of re-worked album product, the constant flow of best-selling books detailing various aspects of the Zeppelin experience, and the on-again, off-again rumors concerning a full-scale band reunion, it often seems as if Led Zeppelin has never really gone away. For successive generations of fans—many of whom have lived their entire lives without ever having experienced the magic of the band performing live—the hallowed Zeppelin mystique remains a tangible reality of rock and roll life. It's been speculated that at every minute of



every day there is a Led Zeppelin song playing on a radio station somewhere on the face of Planet Earth. The majesty and power that was this unmatched hard rock icon in their prime continues to introduce a new generation of fans and bands to the magic that was Led Zeppelin.

"For a long time both Robert and I treated everything surrounding Zeppelin with incredible care," Page said. "We still try to do that, but we've come to realize that there's nothing sacred about it. People deserve to hear the music if they want to. It's as simple as that."

Simple... indeed! Despite the time that has now passed since Led Zeppelin last rocked the music world, their impact remains as strong and as vibrant as ever. No one had ever dared to fly higher, and with more aplomb than the unit comprised of Page, Plant, Jones and Bonham. Quite simply, no other hard rock band has left such a lasting impression on the rock world as the mighty Led Zeppelin.

"We never were a band that sought fame or fortune," Plant stated. "But there was always something very special about Zeppelin. So many other bands have tried to capture what special quality Zeppelin had, but the best they could do was recreate only a small fraction of it. From the moment we first got together, Zeppelin was magical."

### THE ULTIMATE LED ZEPPELIN QUIZ

To band in rick history is an surrounded by legend, or sino, denting mystery, as Led Zeppelin. From their formation in 1960. Through the latest remors concerning their reformation, a continual stream of fascinating, historic bits of information have been generated by the mighty Zep metal machine. Do you think you know everything about Led Zeppelin? Well, have your chince to prove it is our Ultimate Led Zeppelin Chir. Doo't let a have you good and confusion.

- 1. On which classic Tom Jones hit did army Page clay guilant.
- 2. What is the tradic date of John Bonham's doubl?
- 3 What was the original title of the album Presence?
- 4. Which two reck stars first suggested the name Leit Zeppello to Jimmy Page?
- 5. Who is the only woman to make a crooted appearance on a Lad. Zepoelin album?
- 6. What was the name of Led Zeppelin's own record label?
- 7. Who received co writing credit, along with Plant and Pagir, on Bake.

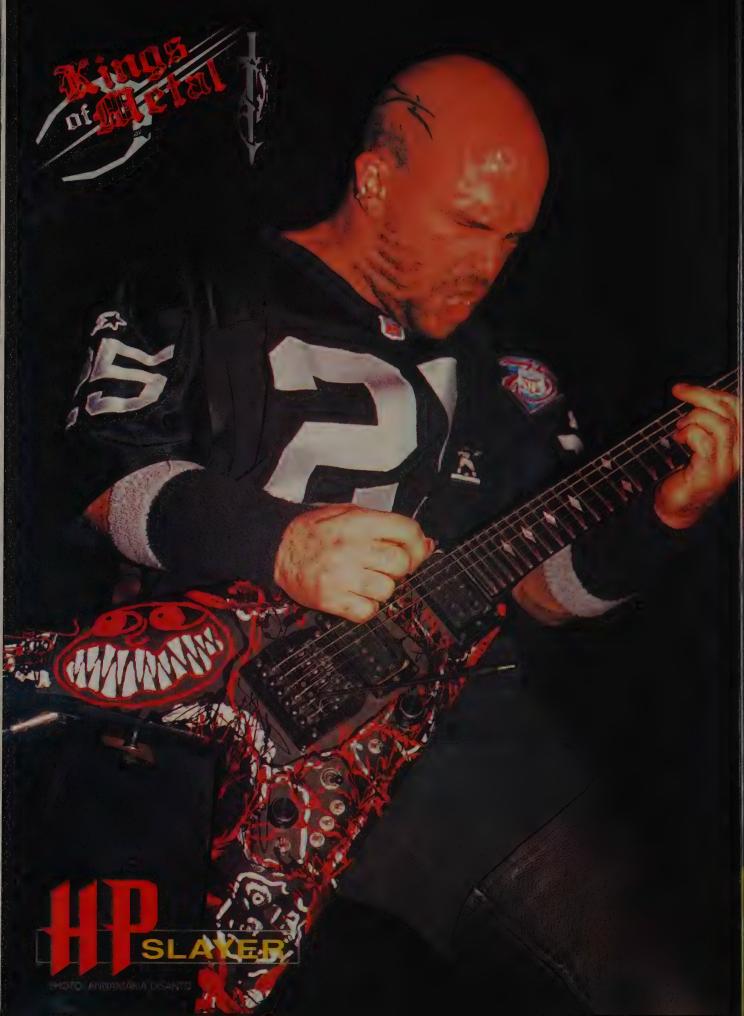
  17th Gonna Leave You.
- 8. What early 170s television show provided Zappetin With thrit first American TV exposure?
- On what date did the condition their last afficial concert—and where was it held?
- 10 Under what name thit Plant, Page, Jones 13 Bootlam. Initially perform?
- 11. In which country were two of Page and Plunt's 1994 sengar recorded?
- 12. Which lamous Zeppelin song served as John Bonnam's solo showcase in concern?
- 13. In what blood viere Plant and Bonnam proforming directly poor to joining Zeopelin?
- 14. Who did Jenny Page originally word to strip in Led Zepodlin?
- 15. The title of the Page/Plant album No Quarter was originally utilized as a sono title on which album?
- What classic black song was recorded on the first albums of both and Zeopelin and the Jeff Book Groun?
- 17. Who, according to legend, is the "lady who knows all that glitters is gold" in Stavillar To Heaven?
- 18. Wignwaship arguethan lite manager of Led Zeppelin?
- 19. West are the symbols called that appear on the cover of
- Led Zeppein NV
- 20. Aside from Robert Plant, name two other legendary singles dimmy. Page has recorded with during the last 15 years.
- 21. What was the first song that Led Zeppelin priming to during their trebeareat?
- 22. What was the date of the billion is st sum?
- 23. What is the name of the tribal Morondan musicians trut appear on

#### No Quarter

- 24. During the recording of which Donovan sung did Jimmy page link.
  meet John Paul Janes?
- 25. What was the name of Hotort Plant's First
- pre-Zeopelin single?

#### A N S W E R S

1. It's Not Unusual 2. September 25, 1980 3. Obelisk
4. The Who's Keith Moon and John Entwistle 5. Sandy Denny
6. Swan Song 7. Anne Breedon 8. Don Kirschner's Rock Concert
9. July 7, 1980, Berlin 10. The New Yardbirds 11. Morocco
12. Moby Dick 13. Hobstweedle 14. Terry Reid 15. Houses 01
14. Poter Grant 19. Runes 20. Paul Rodgers and David Coverdale
21. Train Kept A'Rolling 22. October 15, 1968 at Surrey University
23. The Graoui 24. Hurdy Gurdy Man
25. You Belter Run (later a big hit for Pat Benatar)







# JUDAS PRIEST The Beast Blasts Back

BY WINSTON CUMMINGS

"This is Judas Priest—a degree of menace is not a bad thing."

or 30 years Judas Priest
have epitomized heavy metal
like no other band, a fact loudly and proudly proven
again on their latest release, Angel of Retribution.
With their penchant for wearing black leather stage
gear and making dramatic Harley-topped entrances,
in look, sound and attitude these British Bashers have long
stood as the ultimate metal machine. They've lived, slept and
drank the metal lifestyle, and exuded that metallic credo back to
their millions of headbanging fans around the globe. In vocalist
Rob Halford, these mega-watt masters from Birmingham,
England, have possessed a flamboyant singer with a four octave
range who showed no fear about using his explosive voice to

shatter ear drums and artistic principles with

equal aplomb. In quitarists K.K. Downing and Glenn Tipton, Priest have unleashed a double lead guitar attack the likes of which the rock world had never before experienced. Exchanging fleet-fingered riffs as well as the center stage spotlight, the paired axe aces have graced the band's sound with a structural foundation and musical flair that have served to provide Priest

with their quintessential metallic element.

"For us, it was never about being 'different'," Tipton said.
"We simply reflected the environment in which we grew up—
the steel town of Birmingham. You grew up there, and you were
expected to go into the mill to work. Thankfully, there were
Birmingham bands like Sabbath that went before us and
showed us that there was another path."

When Judas Priest first hit the top of the charts in the early '80s, with the release of their first platinum album, **Screaming For Vengeance**, it represented the culmination of a long, uphill battle for recognition and credibility. Prior to their break-through success, Priest had represented almost a caricature of all that had proceeded them. Lacking the multi-faceted skills of Led Zeppelin, the quasi-Satanic overtones of Black Sabbath or the improvisational flair of Deep Purple, Judas Priest was a no-

holds-barred metal juggernaut— a band the knew only two speeds, loud and fast or louder and faster. There was little subtlety to offset the

group's heavy-handed approach, and while the band's imaginative song structures would venture into previously uncharted metal terrain over the ensuing years, at heart Priest always remained true to the basic metal elements— hammering guitars, screamed vocals and a live-for-today lyrical attitude.

While they were never critical favorites, with many media scribes falsely believing Priest to be little more than a mindless riff factory, almost from the day their debut disc, **Sad Wings Of Destiny**, was released in 1974, it was evident that this was one band willing to take as many musical chances as necessary in

order to succeed.

Mixing almost operatic

drama with their traditional quitar overload, on discs such as British Steel. Screaming for Vengeance and Hell Bent For Leather, Priest set themselves up as the true defenders of the metal faith, one of the few bands willing to state their noholds-barred allegiance to the metal cause. and one quite capable of backing up that allegiance through the sheer power of their music. At times it even seemed as if

they enjoyed scoffing at their detractors. When the leather-clad Halford would burst through the band's exploding wall of amps (most of which were only stage props) atop his gleaming Harley it was high camp, high drama and high energy all rolled into one overwhelming rock and roll package. Priest was an all-out assault on the eyes, ears and sensibilities of all who dared attend one of their shows.

Throughout the '80s Priest ruled as the unmatched champion of the metal realm. While younger, heavier bands may have vied for their title from time to time, none seemed to enjoy the inherent understanding of the myriad intricacies of the metal form that the Priest Beast possessed. Unfortunately, as with all good things, by the time the decade rolled to a close major breaks were already beginning to appear in Priest's metallic armor. Halford began to express dissatisfaction with the group's musi-

Rob Halford: The Metal God returns!

PHOTO: FRANK WHITE



cal direction, believing that the band had begun to be "too safe" to compete in the harder-edged metal world of the '90s. Downing and Tipton held their ground, feeling that Halford would soon come to his senses. In 1991 Halford split from Priest to pursue more "challenging" artistic directions.

In the mean time Tipton and Downing steadfastly held Priest on course, and the unpredictable winds of fate seemed once again to be blowing in their direction. With the addition of a new vocalist in 1995, the group set off to create a fresh metal legacy, one that they hoped would match their previous glories in volume and attitude— if not in chart recognition. It proved to be an uphill fight, with the band's discs appearing on continually smaller labels and their tours playing venues a fraction the size they could have filled in their hey-

day. But, as the old saying goes, good things come to those who wait, and by the summer of '04. Priest once again found themselves in an enviable position-with Halford back aboard after a dozen-year absence, and the world's metal population craving the heavy style of music that has long been Priest's forte. With Angel of Retribution finally here, and their headlining U.S. arena tour about to get underway, the 30th Anniversary of this legendary unit has proven to be one of the most exciting times in Priest history, a fact we recently discussed with the band's returning hero, Rob Halford.

Hit Parader: Is there a story

behind the title. Angel of Retribution?

Rob Halford: It was something that developed rather naturally over time. It was a name that appealed to us since it tied in with our reformation, and with the cover art we had designed, it more or less told everyone that Priest was back and that there would be retribution if fans didn't respond.

HP: That sounds somewhat menacing.

RH: Well, this is Judas Priest—a degree of menace is not a bad thing. I think our fans expect that from us. We didn't want to return without expressing the kind of attitude—both musically and visually—that everyone has always associated with Priest.

HP: There are ten tracks on the disc. That's a "classic" number for a classic band, but rather low in light of modern standards. RH: We had recorded 14 tracks for this album, and they all could have been included. But maybe we are very "old school" in that regard. To us ten just seemed like the ideal number of tracks for this album—nine wasn't enough, eleven was too many. And these songs all worked together so well. It wasn't a difficult decision.

HP: The new disc hits the streets in March—more than a year after your return was announced.

Rob Halford: We had a goal to have the album out in late 2004, but it just didn't work out that way. We were going to release it in December—but we weren't aware that virtually the entire

music industry is closed at that particular time. The label wanted to really focus their marketing energies on this album, so we pushed back the release until March. That works our perfectly because it's just before we're going to begin our U.S. tour.

HP: Aside from the fact that it marks your return to Priest, what makes this a special album for you?

RH: It's special for so many reasons. Perhaps the most important one for me is that it upholds the

traditions and heritage that is so important to Judas Priest. This wasn't an album where we felt the need to experiment a great deal. As soon as Glenn, K.K. and I started writing, our natural instincts took over. And what emerged from that were the incredible riffs and strong vocals that have always distinguished Priest at its best. This album represents Priest in its purest form, and that's something that excites us, and I'm sure will excite the fans as well.

HP: Was there a moment during the last year when you had some doubts concerning how well metal fans would accept the reunited Priest? RH: I do believe such doubts

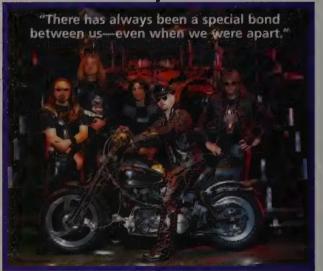
are very normal. You'd need to be somewhat foolish to forge ahead without at least a little self-doubt. But I always knew that fans in America, in particular, had always been so kind to us. I felt that they'd respond to the opportunity to see us together again, and they certainly did. Their response was incredibly warming to all of us, but since I had been out of Priest for over a decade, it was particularly significant to me.

HP: Did it take long for the old Priest "magic" to return?
RH: As unbelievable as it may sound, it was instantaneous both when K.K., Glenn and I started writing, and when we went on stage. But it wasn't like any of us had been retired; we had all been working very hard. So getting together to celebrate 30 years of Priest music was something we all treasured.

HP: There seem to be certain unifying threads to the music presented on Angel of Retribution. Was it designed with a true "concept" in mind?

RH: It's very interesting that you mention that, because the album is very cohesive in that way. I don't know if I'd go so far as to call it a concept album, but there are musical and lyrical





HP: In line with classic Priest albums of the past, this album features some amazing cover art. Where did that come from? RH: Having an incredible visual image is almost as important as having great songs. When you think about some of our past albums, whether it be British Steel, Sad Wings of Destiny or Screaming for Vengeance the cover art springs to mind. That's all part of the metal experience. It's vital to feature the kind of art that will look great on the cover, on T-shirts and onstage. Our only regret is that the CD format forces us to reduce the size of the graphic. But, as you can see, we figured a way of expanding upon it once you get the packaging open.

HP: How excited are you by getting back into American arenas with Priest?

RH: That's where our music always sounds best. I love the outdoor sheds, but having the big Priest guitar riffs, and the voice of the Metal God, bounce off the walls and reverberate around the entire hall is special. That just can't happen outside. We had the chance to play a few headlining shows on our own during Ozzfest off-days, and at those we routinely filled 10,000 seat halls. I felt confident that the demand would be there for us to put on the kind of tour that we wanted. I believed in my heart that kind of tour was what our fans wanted as well.

## **GLENN & K.K. SPEAK OUT!**

GLENN TIPTON: "This regrouping with Rob is not about nostalgia. It's about completing a cycle that Priest started three decades ago. We honestly believe that we can make the best Priest album of our lives, and do the best tour—or we wouldn't even consider it in the first place."

K.K. DOWNING: "For Priest, it's never been a question of whether anything was 'too much'. It was more of a question of 'could it be done?' We were never concerned about taking a great deal of the money we made and pouring it right back into the band, getting the best and biggest light show we could and making sure that each stage show was a full-scale production that would overwhelm everyone who witnessed it. Coming up with some of those ideas for the stage show almost took as much time as preparing material for a new album. But Rob also had a natural theatrical flair that brought it all together."

TIPTON: "At times it seems like we've never been apart. But as I look back on all the work we've done during that time— work that I'm very proud of, by the way— I do realize that a great deal of time has passed. For some people this is the ultimate Judas Priest lineup, and I can certainly understand that. But having been in this band for three decades, I am justifiably proud of everything we've accomplished."

DOWNING: "This album is something that's been on our minds for quite a while. It's obviously a very exciting project for us because it signifies something so exciting— the return of the classic Priest lineup. It's amazing to hear what we're doing now.

the music has definitely taken on a new life. I feel confident that people who are truly familiar with what Priest has been throughout the years will be both pleased and amazed."

TIPTON: "Rob. K.K. and I have always enjoyed what might best be termed a very 'democratic' attitude when it comes to our creative decisions. Perhaps because we're English, we don't hold anything back. If we like something that someone has done: we're quick to say it... and if we don't we're quick to announce that we think it's rubbish. Obviously, I wondered if we'd treat each other a little more kindly when we got back together-not out of necessity, more out of being careful. I'm happy to say that within an hour we were all contentedly arguing about matters, and that made everyone relax and get right into the swing of things

powning: "Playing Ozzfest was a great way for us to reintroduce this Priest lineup to the fans. It allowed us to perform in front of huge crowds every night and really get everyone back into high gear."

TIPTON: "I have a 14 year old son who keeps me quite up-to-date on what's happening in metal. He has CDs by all the new bands, and I do listen to them—especially in the car. But I don't believe any of that has had any sort of impact upon us. We're all very aware of what's going on out there—both the good and the bad—but as far as any of it impacting on Judas Priest...
I'd have to say no."



# UAN HALEN

## made in america

BY PETER SCHWARZ

ut of the West they rode...

America's answer to Led Zeppelin with a lionine tressed vocalist, a rhythm section that could lay down thunder like oi' Zeus himself and a fleet-fingered guitarist destined to reinvent the art of six-string pyrotechnics. That was the world's perception of Van Halen when they first hit the rock scene hard 'n heavy back in 1977. At a time when bland singer/songwriters dominated the State-side scene and soulless corporate rockers ruled the radio airwaves, frontman Diamond David Lee Roth, bassist Michael Anthony, drummer Alex Van Halen and axe ace Eddie Van Halen arrived just in time to give the entire music world a much needed (and much deserved!) kick in the butt. But it wasn't as if these four fun-loving rockers envisioned themselves in such a pretentious, "saving American rock and roll" manner.

Heck, these guys would rather have danced the night away than fought the battle of evermore!

As soon as their self-titled debut disc first hit the rock masses like a sucker punch to the chin, it was clear that the VH brigade was determined to do things their way! With Eddie's legendary Eruption both heralding in a new age of sixstring masters and issuing a clarion call to a genera-

on call to a generation of rockers, Van Halen's intent from Day One has been to turn everyone's expectations inside out—and have a full-scale party while

Indeed, Van Halen has always been hard rock's answer to a traveling circus side-show troupe. Often it's seemed that their libidinous, hell-raising, hard-to-believe off-stage stories have been just as important as their studio and on-stage victories in determining VH's fate in the hard rock history book. From the very beginning, this was a band that has been comprised of equal parts pure musical genius, high-flying on-stage "charasma" and Borscht Belt comic shitck—with a healthy dose of FM radio fodder thrown in for good measure (thanks, Sammy!) Oh yeah, Sammy Hagar. Let's not forget the Red Rocker, who upon joining the VH brigade in 1985 (after Dave's rather misguided departure to pursue his Hollywood Dreams) led Van Halen to their most successful—at least in a commercial sense—period ever.

But no matter what they may have accomplished with Hagar from

the mid '80s until his departure in the mid '90s (only to rejoin the band in 2004 for their incredibly well received "reunion" tour), for many Van Halen fans the only *real* VH was the one that featured Diamond Dave. Indeed Roth's tour of duty with Van Halen was one for the ages. The stories surrounding that band are the stuff of legend; the back-stage blowups after finding "prohibited" brown M&M's in their dressing room, a jet-set lifestyle that established the standards for rock and roll excess, the hordes of groupies that routinely found their way to the band's hotel, the on-stage spectaculars that left both the band and their fans drained but begging for more

From the moment the group began playing their first shows on the famed L.A. Sunset Strip in 1976 (originally under such names as Rat Salade and Mammoth) there was no looking back. The Dutch-born

Van Halen brothers had teamed with Indiana native Roth and L.A. boy Anthony to form a band unlike anything anyone had seen or heard before. By the time the band's self-titled debut disc hit the streets in the late '70s, featuring the group's classic cover of the Kink's You Really Got Me as well as such instant crowd faves as

Running With the Devil, Van Halen was primed



"I don't hold grudges for long; the trick is to keep this music alive."

and ready to take over the world! They were loud, they were brash and they were totally American.

Unlike their super-cool English hard rock predecessors like Cream and Led Zeppelin, Van Halen came across like the hip guys next door, four dudes back from an afternoon of surfing just in time to raise a musical ruckus at your backyard barbecue. They emerged at a time when the music biz needed a jolt of hard rockin' vitality, and in a single explosion of pure, brilliant musical energy, they forever changed the course of State-side rock and roll history. In Roth, Van Halen possessed a stage general that could instantly win over any size crowd with his clownish stage buffoonery and high spirited athleticism. And in Eddie they possessed the single most gifted and influential guitarist of his generation— a guy that amazed and astounded everyone within earshot with each note he played. Aided by the rock-solid rhythm section of Alex VH and Anthony, this was a band that seemingly had it all.

"Seeing Van Halen in the early days was simply amazing," a long-



time Sunset Strip resident stated. "Nobody ever had more energy, more of a sense of purpose. They always played a show as if it were taking place in the L.A. Forum, and it didn't matter if there were 20 people in the house or 20,000!"

Somewhat amazingly, even after their first album went double platinum, there were still plenty of people who had their doubts about Van Halen. They thought the band was "too gimmicky", that Roth was "too obnoxious" and that Eddie's guitar work was merely "style over substance." However, any remaining doubt over VH's long-term status in the hard rock hierarchy was forever silenced after the release of their second album, the cleverly titled Van Halen II, in 1979. It was then that the band took on the prestigious (but potentially dangerous) assignment of opening for the Ozzy Osbourne-fronted Black Sabbath—then one of the biggest bands in the world. Night-in and night-out the VH brigade blew Sabbath off the stage, with their high-octane work serving as a major impetus behind Ozzy's decision to leave the band and start his solo

"They destroyed us every night," Ozzy said. "It was embarrassing. It wasn't that we were playing particularly badly, but we were a bit strung out and they were so energetic and so full of life. They made us look like a bunch of old men. It opened my eyes and shocked me. I had never seen anything like that before."

Unfortunately, that tour may have represented an emotional and artistic peak for the Roth-era Van Halen. From there, on such subsequent albums as Fair Warning, Women And Children First and Diver Down, the group began showing an increased laziness with an over reliance on cover tunes and a dearth of exciting new material. Suddenly it seemed as if those nay-sayers who had expressed

the opinion that the band could never again match the magic of their debut LP seemed to be right. Stories of internal problems and even of substance abuse began to spring up, and the first rumors indicating that Roth was unhappy with the band's directionboth on stage and offbegan to emerge. All of this seemed to be settled- at least temporarily- when the group's landmark disc, 1984, hit the stands. Featuring the unit's first Number One single, Jump, the album proceeded to sell more than three million copies and make Van Halen bigger than ever.

Who could have imagined that only a year later, Roth would be out of the band and an astounding musical era would have abruptly come to an end. Depending on whom you choose to believe, either Roth was fired from VH for showing too much interest in his solo discs like Crazy From The Heat and his supposed movie career, or he left the group because he was disappointed by what he believed to be the increasingly unpredictable behavior of the VH brothers. Either way, the rock world was shocked. This musical "brotherhood", a band that had set musical

precedents that few other groups had ever dreamed of attaining, had broken asunder at the peak of their power.

Once again, the time-honored axiom of a group that was laughing on the outside and crying of the inside proved to be prophetically true. Certainly both Van Halen and Roth would go on to make more music— and for VH at least, enjoy the heights of commercial acclaim— but it was just never quite the same. The special magic that was the original Van Halen just couldn't be matched, even with Hagar's powerful voice and deft songwriting touch playing a more and more influential role in establishing the band's sound.

Certainly the Hagar years were magic in terms of album sales and concert revenues. On a succession of discs including **0u812**, **5150** and **Balance**, the reconstituted quartet turned into the hard rock equivalent of McDonald's—serving millions around the globe with easily palatable, instantly disgetable doses of guitar driven popmetal pabulum. But as the band's catalog sales soared, their hardwon rep as fun-loving hooligans living on the edge of a rock and roll sword began to tarnish. Instead, the VH rock empire began to be viewed as a somewhat safe, predictable music machine, where Hagar's ready-for-radio vocals did little to satisfy fan's yearning for some good ol' Diamond Dave soul-based rants. After nearly a decade of living high on the hog thanks to Hagar's prime-time talents, even Eddie and Alex slowly began to grow tired of cranking out virtually the same songs on album after album, and by the mid-'90s it became apparent that some changes were on the way.

Then, in 1996 something strange, something almost unbelievable, happened. Following hot-on-the-heels of the band's most lucrative tour ever, Eddie Van Halen decided that he wanted to release a "greatest hits" collection to commemorate the 20th anniversary of

VH's formation- and that he wanted to bring in Roth to record a few new songs to commemorate the occasion (as well as to make the "hits" package more marketable). Almost immediately Hagar began to balk at such a notion, stating that not only did he hate "best of" collections, but that the very idea of having Dave hanging around offended his notso-delicate rock and roll sensibilities. For his part, Roth was more than thrilled by the idea of rejoining his former cronies--- something he had been trying to do virtually from the moment he first left the VH brigade to pursue his own career back in 1985. Something had to give, and it did; Hagar soon released a terse statement indicating that he had encountered a number of "artistic differ-ences" with Van Halen, and that he had regretfully decided to leave the group.

Whether, in fact, Hagar decided to leave, or was pushed (there were rumors of lifestyle differences that had caused growing tensions to develop within Van Halen), for a short while it looked like the group's artistic wheel was about to go full circle. While the VH brothers were initially hesitant to



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PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO



admit it, word quickly spread that David Lee Roth was once again a member-in-good-standing of Van Halen, and that the band was seriously considering the undertaking of a full-scale tour. But almost as soon as fans from Tokyo to Topeka got excited about the idea, the whole Dave/VH reunion idea blew up in everyone's face especially after a disastrous "surprise" appearance the four made together at that year's MTV Awards show. Within days Eddie was pointing fingers (including the middle one) at Dave calling him "selfish", among more unprintable things. For his part, Dave seemed as surprised by the anger directed his way as he was by the initial invitation to rejoin the band. By year's end, Roth was out and into the VH fold was former Extreme frontman Gary Cherone. That unit recorded one album, 3which supposedly represented the band's third incarnation, but more accurately represented the number of folks who actually enjoyed the disc.

Eddie and Alex knew they needed to shake things up a bit," a studio source said. "There was talk of bringing back Dave, but in the end they turned to Gary. The guy did nothing wrong, but he just wasn't the right fit. It's that simple; it didn't work.

But following the Cherone disaster, just as Van Halen was beginning to be written off by most "real" rockers as little more than a middle-aged, middle-of-the-road band with a noble heritage, things began to take some interesting twists within the band's camp. Following a lengthy period of inactivity during which Eddie suffered through personal hell—first with the demise of his long-time marriage to actress Valerie Bertinelli, and then with his various physical ailments, including hip surgery and a cancer scare—suddenly it seemed as if the world was once again fascinated by Van Halen. Another "greatest hits" compliation set, Best of Both Worlds-a clever tip of the cap to the group's Dave/Sammy dichotomy—proved to be a best seller. And when it was announced that the band would return to the road for the first time in five years (and the first time in a decade with Hagar at the helm) ticket sales went through the roof-even at an excessive \$100 a pop.

It now seems clear that nearly 30 years after the days when Alex and Eddie first got serious about pursuing their rock and roll dreams, the "legend" of Van Halen-filled as it is with classic stories, ribald rumors and incredible innuendoes— is as vibrant as ever. That fact was brought into sharp focus during the summer of 2004 when the Hagar-fronted tour got the rock rumor mill cranking in high gear. Why was Sammy back? What happened to the latest much-discussed 'reunion" with Roth? How is Eddie's health going to hold up? But such questions—and their corresponding answers—have always been a vital part of the VH experience. These guys know they just kind'a go with the territory.
"We've grown totally immune to them by now," said Anthony. "If

we do hear 'em, all they do is make us laugh. Even on this tour, where we're celebrating Sammy's return and us getting back on the road-people were asking me about Dave almost every day. Go figure!'

For some fans— those old enough to remember the unprecedented jolt that Van Halen had given to the staid rock world when they first hit the scene nearly three decades ago -- the reunion with Hagar was met with an enthusiastic smile. For others-those who've grown up knowing only "vintage" VH through airplay on their local radio stations— the news was met with looks of confusion and doubt. Could a Hagar-inspired Van Halen recapture even a smidgen of the magic of yesteryear? Could these middle-aged rockers still be the "bad boys" of old? Well, while they may no longer be the hell-raising, kiss-stealing, jet-set playboys of yesteryear, apparently what they are has been enough to turn the band's recent tour into one of 2004's biggest road attractions.

'It's kind of surprising to realize we're working with Sammy again," Eddie Van Halen said. "Even a year ago there wasn't any real contact between us. A lot of the credit for this has to go to Mike (Anthony) who stayed in touch with Sammy over the years and told us how great he was sounding. Well, he was right. The guy always had an amazing voice, and it might be better now than ever before. A lot of time has passed since he left- I don't hold any grudges, and evidently he doesn't either. Hey, it's all great to me-it's keeping the music of Van Halen alive and well,"

### EDDIE REVEALS HIS SECRETS!

Eddie Van Halen: I feel pretty good, all things considered. I'm having a great time, and playing music again. If you can't feel good doing that, then there's something really wrong with you.

EVH: (Laughing) No, I don't get tired of it. But believe it or not, I'm still surprised by it. I still get blown away when a young musician comes up to me and starts telling me what a big impact I've had on his life and on his playing. I kind of look at myself as a contemporary, then I realize that Van Halen's been around for 25 years.

EVH: I guess I'd have to say that I have made a mark of some kind. but I'd like to think that it was for the music as a whole more than just for my guitar playing. We don't go on stage just to show off my playing. I guess there are some guys who do that, but I'm not one of em. People say that there is a different style of playing since I've been around, and I guess that's true, but I don't know it that's good or bad

EVH: Because sometimes I feel some younger players try to copy what they've heard other people do rather than come up with new things on their own. Hey, I certainly had my influences, and I tried to copy them to some extent. But then I made sure that I took it a step further, you know, put my own stamp on it. I think there are also a lot of guys who've gotten the idea that just playing as fast as they can is the answer to everything. There's nothing wrong with that - but sometimes that's what you do to warm up for the stage, it's not what you play once you're up there. A lot of guys have replaced feeling and emotion with speed, and that does bother me.

HP: A few years back you feld us that you doe't feel your quatar style has changed that much over the years. Are you now consciously by

EVH: Yeah, I did say that my playing hasn't changed that much-that I hear tapes of us from ten or even 20 years ago and basically I'm playing the same way today. But no, I'm not really working on bringing in new things. I've never felt limited by the way I play, so I don't work on expanding what I do. I try to expand the musical framework we have, but not necessarily through my guitar work. I've always been pretty satisfied by what I can do on the guitar.



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# FOUR FOR ALL

BY BRYAN HARDING

t's now been more than 30 years since Kiss first exploded like a neutron bomb on the rock and roll scene; 30-plus years filled with incredible music, larger-than-life personalities and the most exciting stage show ever seen by the eyes of mortal man. Today, as Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley keeping the band alive by skillfully regurgitating the high-voltage sounds and on-stage hijinks that first brought them fame and fortune three decades ago, there's no question that Kiss still has much to contribute to the contemporary metal world. While new-age shock rockers like Slipknot may have left Kiss in the dust in terms of sheer outrageousness, no other band will ever match these legendary Costumed Crusaders in terms of their creativity, originality and longevity

in the rock and roll world. But let's not dwell on what Kiss is in 2005. Let's think back to what they once represented to every red-blooded rocker in the U.S.A.

In their mid '70s prime, Kiss was everything any kid who ever picked up an electric guitar dreamed of being. They were loud, they were arrogant, and they were bigger than life. Paul Stanley, Gene Simmons, Ace Frehley and Peter Criss were comic book heroes come-to-life, four black-and-white clad rockers who just-so-happened to be the biggest band on earth. At the height of their commercial powers, when such albums as **Destroyer**, **Love Gun** and **Kiss Alive** ranked as must-have staples of any high school kid's record collection, Kiss was more than "mere" musical tastemakers. They were a multi-national conglomerate that spread their influence over a wide swath of rock-related terrain which included television shows, movies, merchandise and record labels.

It was impossible to walk by a newsstand or turn on the radio in 1976 without confronting "Star Child" Paul, "Space" Ace, "Demon" Gene or Peter the "Cat". Kiss was both omnipresent and omnipotent, a band that world single-handedly revolutionize both the commercial and theatrical



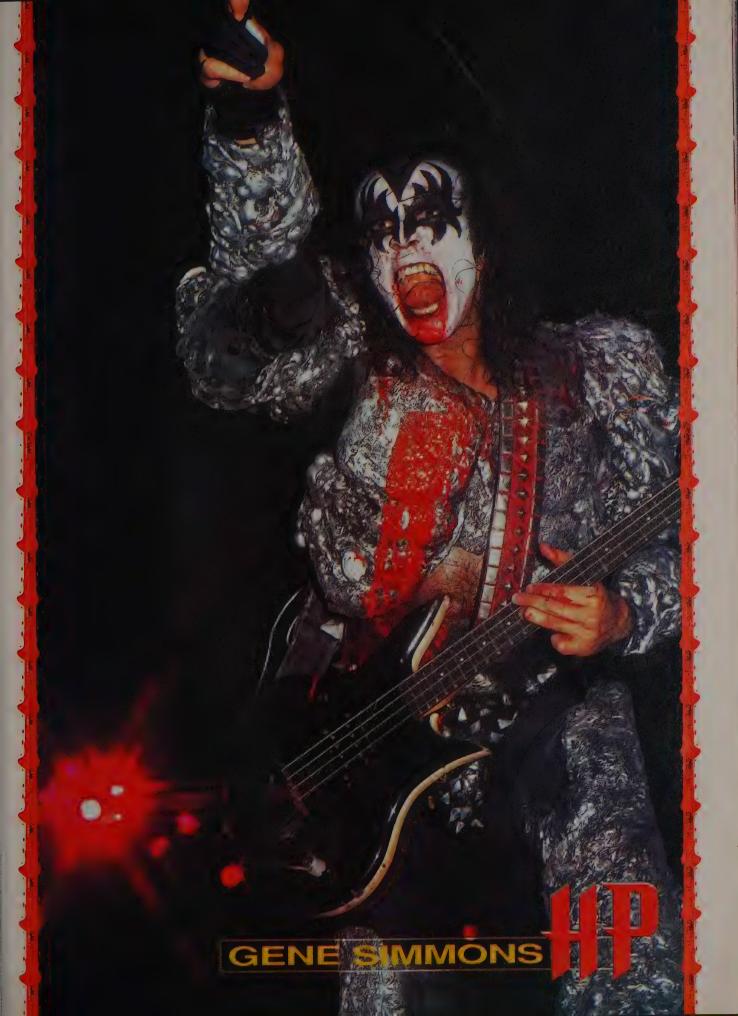
"This band was basically four guys who shared a musical vision and were determined to do just about anything to make that vision a reality." ethic of the hard rock empire. Along the way they also helped establish the fact that America could produce hard rock bands capable of standing up to their British brethren such as Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath— at least in terms of fame if not musical dexterity. While some cynics would try to quickly dismiss the group as little more than a band of no-talent charlatans masquerading as rock stars, their never-ending string of hits, and their ability to create truly unforgettable in-concert experiences, made Kiss virtually impervious to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

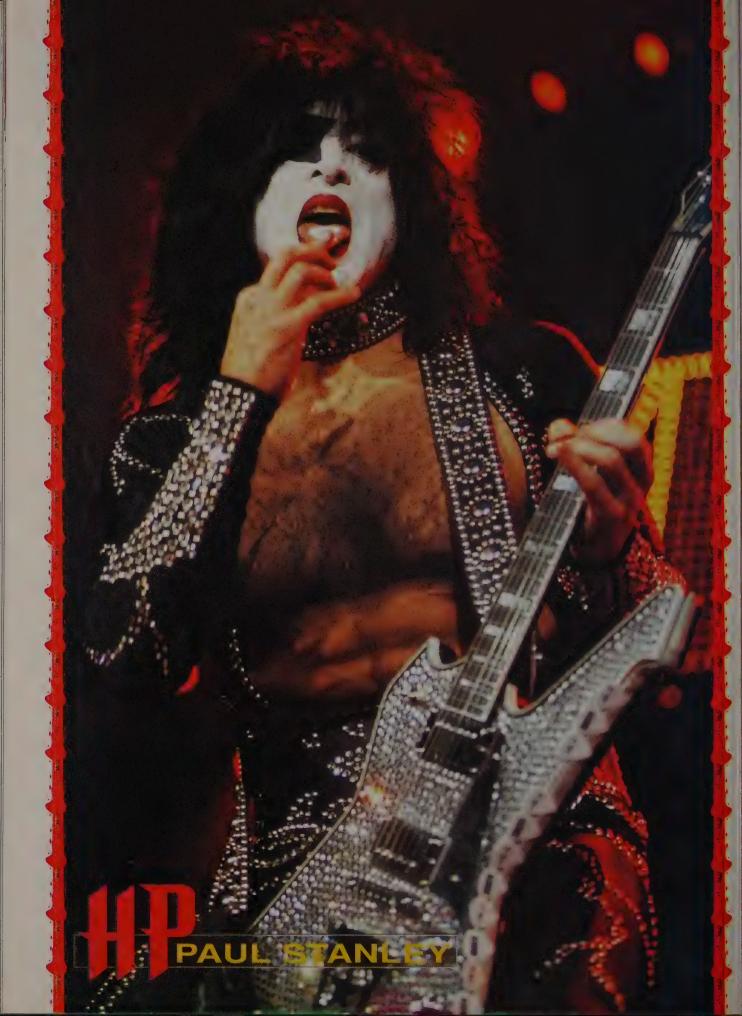
Seeing Kiss on stage in their costumed prime was a pure eye-popping, jaw-dropping, ear-blasting experience that nothing this side of a nuclear explosion could match. From the moment the lights went up, catching the four musical "brothers" standing together at the top of their stage's giant ramp-way, the crowd knew they were in for a

knew they were in for a non-stop rock and roll thrill-ride the likes of which *nobody* had ever seen before. With Gene performing his nightly "staples" of breathing fire and spitting blood, and Paul prowling the

footlights like a caged lion, a Kiss concert was a bastardized cross between a circus side show and a Broadway-musical-from-hell. Through it all, however, the Kiss Army ate it up. They stood and cheered from first note to last, singing along with every song and flailing their arms in wild abandon as they played air guitar in honor of each of Ace's searing six string solos.

"We planned everything for maximum impact," Stanley said. "I don't think there's ever been a rock and roll band that's spent more time in the planning of their stage show. We worked on the stage itself with the best engineers in the business, and the lighting effects were years ahead of their time. But, despite all of that, it didn't always go exactly how we had planned. I remember once when we all came down the steps at the start of the show, and I looked around and Ace was nowhere to be seen. Then I looked up to the top of the platform we had just come down and all I could see were his huge, silver platform boots sticking into the air.





Evidently he had been standing in some water when he touched his quitar, and he ended up giving himself one hell of a shock.

The shock that Frehley gave himself on stage that night was nothing in comparison to the shock the entire rock world felt as Kiss began dominating the music scene as no band had done before. From their humble beginnings in New York City in 1971 when four gentlemen named Stanley Eisen (Paul) Chiam Klein (Gene), Paul Frehley (Ace) and Peter Crissucola (Peter) first married their fortunes together, their's has been a unique rocket ride straight to the top— a journey unprecedented in the long annals of rock history. Inspired by the moderate success of another early '70s Big Apple band, the New York Dolls, Kiss jumped into the fray with a well-planned approach that left little to chance. They knew the critics would hate them. They knew that mainstream rock society would shun them like the plague. But they also knew that a new generation of kids had come along who were searching for rock and roll heroes to

identify with- and Kiss were determined to be those heroes.

"We all had come from rather conservative backgrounds," Simmons explained. "I was teaching school at about the same time that Kiss was forming. The band was basically four guvs who shared a musical vision and were determined to do just about anything to make that vision a reality. We knew that our regular jobs meant long hours and little pay. We knew rock and roll meant money, women and travel. It wasn't a tough choice to

From the moment their self-titled debut album was released in February, 1974, it was apparent that Kiss was going to make a mark on the rock world. What wasn't clear at the time was if that mark was going to be a significant and lasting list of accomplishments or merely a brief and messy smear on the pages of the rock history books. As expected, Kiss was initially called every nasty name in creation by the rock press. Their kabuki-styled makeup was ridiculed as "juvenile", their songs were dismissed as "three chord garbage" and their stage shows were derided for their "perversion and pretension". But

while all this was going on, something interesting was happening—a small yet significant number of fans were actually purchasing the Kiss album and demanding that their local radio stations start playing it. While that album, and its two follow-ups, Hotter Than Hell and Dressed To Kill, never managed to significantly crack the charts or catapult Kiss beyond opening act status, they all served to reinforce the ever-growing Kiss Army and set the wheels in motion for the "revolution" that was

In the 13 months that separated the release of their first three albums (Ah, those were the days!) Kiss was able to start creating more and more elaborate stage sets, incorporate more outrageous elements into their live show, and continually pepper their act with a fresh supply of new songs. Gradually their popularity began to grow, especially in the midwest where cities like Cleveland and Detroit embraced the band like longlost sons. In fact, by the summer of 1975 the band felt strong enough to headline arena shows in the mid-west, and it was during a stint in Detroit's Cobo Hall that they decided to let the tape machine roll. The results were Kiss Alive, the album that truly put Kiss on the rock and roll map. From that moment on there was no turning back. Soon Destroyer, Rock & Roll Over and Love Gun emerged (amazingly, all in a 15 month) period) and Kiss found themselves with no less than three albums sitting atop the Top 200 of the sales charts. In an incredibly short period of time they had gone from being a band struggling for recognition and respect into one of the biggest groups in the world.

That was a really amazing time," Stanley said. "Everything happened so fast. As I look back it amazes me how quickly we managed to get albums done— especially since we seemed to be on the road throughout that entire time. But I think we were just running on pure adrenaline. We'd write between shows, and once we went into the studio we worked really fast. We could sense that things were breaking for us, and we were determined to take full advantage of the opportunity.

By the time Kiss released Alive II in October of 1977, it was if they were issuing a statement that an era was closing. What had begun with their first live disc, seemed to be culminated with their second in-concert collection. During that two year period, Kiss had sold over ten million albums, toured the world three times and been celebrated as the most recognizable band on the face of the earth. But the pure energy that had propelled the band along since their formation was beginning to run thin, and cracks were beginning to appear within the group's structural framework. While on the surface the unit appeared to still be a four man brotherhood- the first band since the Beatles with every member a distinct and equally recognizable and important cog in the group's musical

machinery—beyond that superficial mask of happiness problems were beginning to brew. While Simmons and Stanley had always been at Kiss' artistic nucleus, Frehley and Criss began to withdraw more from the band's creative process. Rumors of drug use and heavy drinking began to pop up around Ace and Peter, and it was a thinly guarded secret that Gene and Paul were more than a little peeved at their bandmates' often unpredictable on and off-stage behav-

Still, despite these problems that were kept carefully away from the every-preying eyes of the Kiss Army, the band rolled on. They began taking things at a slower pace, releasing a "greatest hits" collection Double Platinum in mid-1978, and following up that album in the fall with the appearance of the band member's four separate solo albums. This controversial move seemed to upset the band's loyal followers, many of whom believed that Kiss was truly only Kiss when all four group members were functioning together. It almost seemed as if these fans made an outright protest against the solo discs, turning each into a commercial disappoint-

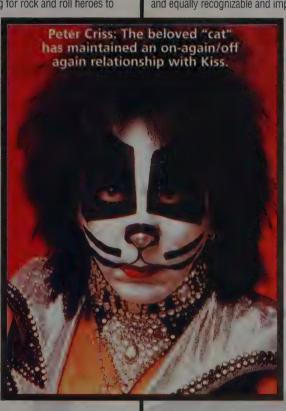
ment, despite the fact that Ace surprisingly came up with the set's only hit, his remake of New York Groove. It wouldn't be until May, 1979, nearly two years after the release of Love Gun, that Kiss would again release an album, Dynasty, and by then some of the band's commercial momentum had begun to wane.

"Things had gone so well for us in 1976 and 1977, that there was practically no where to go but down," Stanley said. "But looking back, we don't regret anything that we did during that time. The solo albums were a lot of fun, and we needed to take a little break away from one another. The four of us had been together non-stop for six years! That's a little

hard to take for anybody.

When Dynasty failed to reach the commercial heights of its predecessors (though it still went platinum) there were those in the media who gladly stated "the Golden Age of Kiss has come and gone." In fact, they may have been right. While the band's outlandish stage show was still selling-out arenas around the world, the group's internal chemistry had irreparably changed, and a fast-growing rift was developing between the Simmons/Stanley team and the Frehley/Criss axis. Paul and Gene, always the in-control business brains behind the Kiss machine, began to fret more and more frequently about the increasingly unpredictable behavior of their follow Kissters, and it often appeared as if Ace and Peter were indeed running out-of-control. Still, with the money rolling in and tour offers from around the world filling the corporate mail box, it just wasn't the time to make any drastic moves. But one could sense that they were coming...and they were.

It would take two more years, and two more albums— Unmasked and The Elder—before the big move finally occurred. First Peter, then



Ace, were asked to leave the band (or forced out—depending on whom you ask.) Peter was replaced by Eric Carr, a talented drummer who joined the band for his first show on a hot summer's night at New York's Palladium Theater. With the band's help, he altered Peter's trademark "cat" into something resembling a raccoon, though to this day few Kiss fans are certain of exactly what Eric's stage persona was supposed to be. For a short while longer, Ace held on, battling his abuse problems. But

sion of Kiss was struggling. Rumors soon began to spread that an even more drastic move than the firing of Ace and Peter would soon shock the Kiss world. Finally, in 1983 it happened—a full decade after first emerging, Kiss decided to drop their trademark facial makeup. To many of the group's long-time supporters it was the final straw—the ultimate indignation. No longer were Kiss their four super heroes, they were just another rock and roll band. It was obviously a difficult decision for

Simmons and Stanley—perhaps even a tougher decision than splitting with Ace and Peter. But with their '70s glory days behind them, and a new wave of heavy metal about to begin, Kiss wanted to literally and figuratively put on a fresh face for the '80s. While some industry insiders argued that the move was done strictly for financial reasons—to increase lagging interest in Kiss—the band's members insisted (and still insist) it was just the right time to make the move.

"Taking off the makeup was a very hard decision for us," Simmons said. "That was what many people knew best about us. It was our trademark. But at the same time it had become somewhat limiting. We sensed that there was a renewed interest in hard rock music in the early '80s and we wanted to be part of that. Removing the makeup was the only way we could effectively move on with our career."

Despite their bold decision, things didn't proceed particularly smoothly for Kiss over the next few years. After releasing the moderately successful Lick It Up in 1983, the admittedly strange Vincent was replaced by the talented Mark St. John, who after developing a debilitating case of carpel-tunnel syndrome in his hands was replaced by Bruce Kulick (whose brother Bob is rumored to have "subbed" for Ace on many of Kiss' early albums) in time for 1985's Asylum. While Kiss' ensuing '80s albums were to each sell at least 500,000 copies, and their tours routinely packed arenas from coast-to-coast, it was obvious that the band was being overshadowed by a new generation of younger, heavier, hungrier bands— many of whom, ironically, were to site Kiss as their primary influence.

"It's great when young bands come along and tell you how much of an impact you've had on their lives," Stanley explained. "But as far as I was concerned, we were their contemporaries as much as their influence, and we set out on stage every night to prove that point. We always wanted to take the hottest opening act we could find—the band everyone was talking about—just so we could try to blow them off the stage. And I don't think it's bragging to say that most of the time we did."

By the late '80s, with the release of such discs as Crazy Nights and Hot In The Shade, Kiss had settled into a steady, comfortable sales pattern. They were no longer the Biggest Band In The Land—an honor that had been transferred to the likes of Metallica and Motley Crue. But they still held their own against anyone, producing albums guaranteed to hit the top of the charts. Yet it was never quite the same. Everywhere Gene and Paul went they

were confronted by young fans who demanded to know why they wouldn't reteam with Ace and Peter and reform the "real" Kiss. What Stanley and Simmons didn't want to reveal was that their relationship with their former bandmates was still extremely strained, and both Criss and Frehley were still unsuccessfully battling the demons of drugs and alcohol.

The rumors, however, just wouldn't go away. As Kiss entered the '90s the stories of a possible Kiss reunion kept growing stronger and stronger. As fast as those rumors hit the rock wires, however, Simmons and Stanely would shoot them down. They took great pride in pointing out that in Kulick and Carr they had musicians that could play rings around Frehley and Criss, and while that may well have been true, Kiss fans never fully accepted any of the band's "substitute" members as they had accepted Ace and Peter. But it was the tragic death of Carr in 1992,



by late 1982, shortly after the release of **Creatures Of The Night**, Ace was out and Vinnie Vincent, the short-lived "Ank-man" was aboard. The Kiss Army tried to embrace the band's new members, but as Stanley now understands, it was just never the same.

"From the outside looking in, Kiss was this incredible four-man machine," he said. "Each member had his own following, and I think that was great. Ace and Peter had as many fans as Gene and I did, and I understand how difficult it was on our fans to accept anyone new in the band. But they didn't understand what was happening within the group at the time. Things had become very difficult. We had to make a move not only to save Kiss, but to save Peter and Ace."

Despite all the kind words that Simmons and Stanley issued about their departed comrades at the time, it was quickly apparent to everyone with both eyes and ears that this new and supposedly "improved" verafter a long, brave battle against cancer, that reignited the reunion debate all over again. While Kiss merely wanted to mourn the loss of their good friend Carr, they were forced to begin answering a new series of questions concerning the rehiring of Criss.

"That was a very painful time for us," Simmons said. "Eric Carr was one of the nicest, most sincere, and most talented people I had ever met. He suffered with his disease so bravely, and we wanted him to remain strongly in the minds of all Kiss fans. It wasn't the right time to consider a reunion...it was just time to remember Eric and move on."

Move on they did, hiring another Eric, Eric Singer—fresh from his stint with former Ozzy Osbourne guitarist Jake E. Lee in the band Badlands—to be their new drummer. Singer brought a renewed passion to

Kiss, providing them with both an incredible kit technique (as evidenced on the albums **Revenge** and **Alive III**) but also an understanding and love of Kiss' history and lore. In fact, it was to be Singer who would actually open the doors for the Kiss reunion when it would finally take place in 1996. Singer's respect for Criss had long been apparent, and when Peter contacted the band about attending a Los Angeles-based Kiss convention in 1995, it was Singer who recommended that the band's former drummer sit in with the group during one of their acoustic convention sets. From there things began to take on a life of their own. Soon Frehley had been contacted to take part in the band's historic 1995 *MTV Unplugged* appearance, and within months rumor had become reality as announcements were made that the original Kiss, in full costume, would be taking their legendary **Alive II** concert stage out of mothballs and utilizing it on the American tour trail throughout the tailend of 1996.

It was a dream-come-true for both Kiss' long-time fans, as well as for younger followers, most of whom were too young to have ever witnessed the band on stage in their prime. While countless cynics noted that this "reunion" not-so-ironically came at a time when many industry pundits were predicting that Kiss as they had previously stood would not be able to even fill small theaters on a tour, others admitted that there was still incredible demand for the "original" Kiss. Simmons and Stanley admitted to being pleasantly surprised that news of their reunion caused such ripples through the normally jaded waters of rock society, and despite the claims that these cagey old rock veterans were bringing back the band's classic lineup in order to cash in on one more humongous pay-day (which, in fact, reportedly turned out to be in excess of \$70 million in 1997 alone), they insisted that no amount of money could make them reform Kiss if their hearts and souls weren't into it.

"Do you really think we need the money?" Simmons said at the time. "I can guarantee that we don't. We're doing this because the time is finally right. Ace and Peter have gotten their lives together, and they have always been a part of the Kiss family. On top of that, Kiss has always been about surprises, about doing what everyone thought was impossible or improbable. Everyone said this would never happen. Don't you think that's enough motivation for us?"

The tour was an incredible success of both an economic and artistic level— exceeding even the band's hopes and dreams. But Kiss fans everywhere weren't satisfied with "just" a tour, they wanted more...much more. In fact the one thing they wanted more than anything else was a new album from the one and only original Kiss. For a long time it seemed as if the band members themselves would be less than obliging. At tour's end, when Kiss had regained all of their career momentum, and then some, one might have imagined that the unit would have jumped at the chance to jump into the studio and keep their hard rockin' ball rolling. But rather than doing so, the group procrastinated and waited,



choosing to dig out some four year-old tapes featuring Kulick and Singer for the album Carnival of Souls. To say the least the disc was a disappointment to Kiss loyalists, who despite the disc's high quality contents, wanted little to do with any of Kiss' former incarnations. They wanted Ace, Peter, Gene and Paul— and quite simply, nothing else would do!

What those fans didn't know was at the exact same time that Carnival Of Souls was making its quick and far-from-spectacular chart run, Simmons and Stanley were carefully considering Kiss' next move. They clearly realized that their following wanted-in fact demanded-an album by the original Kiss, but at the same time they wanted to make sure that they minimized the "dangers" inherent in such a move. Once they recorded again with Ace and Peter, their commitment to the original Kiss was

no longer a one-time-only "spectacular— it was more-or-less permanent. They wanted to make sure that both their guitarist and drummer were as committed in mind and spirit to this on-going venture as they were. On top of that there was the ever-present question of money. While both Frehley and Criss had been well compensated for their roles in the "reunion" tour, their take still fell far short of the tens of millions wracked in by Simmons and Stanley. This time around both Ace and Peter wanted a more equitable division of the financial pie.

All these questions and answers served to slow Kiss' new recording plans to a virtual halt. At first it was hoped that a new disc would emerge by the end of 1997...then by the spring of '98...then by the summer... then by the fall. In fact, Kiss didn't even get into the studio to begin work on their long-awaited new disc, **Psycho Circus**, until the early spring of 1999. And even then, the process was a slow one. Rumors filled the rock wires indicating of internal turmoil, of how Simmons and Stanley had supposedly "rejected" every tune that Frehly and Criss had brought in, of how complete songs were recorded and then tossed aside, of how each and every band member was at each other's throat. Thankfully, virtually all of this talk proved to be little more than the work of a few overactive imaginations. And while things didn't proceed exactly without a hitch during the recording process for the group's new album, the studio scene was a far cry from a daily reenactment of World War III.

"We wanted to make sure it was the best album we could possibly make," Stanley said. "Because of that there was a lot of attention paid to every detail. We knew that the eyes and ears of millions of fans would be focused on us, and more than anything else, we didn't want to disappoint them."

The fact is that **Psycho Circus** was a spotty, derivative album, at best. But it didn't *need* to be "classic" Kiss, all it needed to do was give these guys further reason to keep touring. Indeed, in 2002, after another year long road run, the band announced that they would begin their "farewell" tour... one that has yet to come to a conclusion, and from the looks of things probably never will. In recent years, Frehley has once again left the band (replaced by long-time band associate Tommy Thayer) and "Criss has enjoyed an on-again/off-again relationship with Simmons and Stanley. Still, through it all, the Kiss on-stage magic has remained intact. The blood spewing, fire-breathing fun can still delight 10,000 fans on a nightly basis, and rumors of yet another band studio effort (their first in four years) are currently filling the air.

Certainly it seems safe to say that while they may now rank as little more than heavy metal's answer to the Beach Boys—a band relying on the presentation of songs more than two decades old—Kiss is destined to live on forever. Whether they decide to hang up their platform shoes tomorrow or kind high on rockin' until they hit 60, their contributions to the heavy metal kingdom can never be overlooked.

You wanted the best? You got the best... Kiss!!



BY REESE HARPER

You can't buy that kind of feeling. It only comes over the course of time."

t took Black Sabbath 35 years to complete one of the most improbable journeys in rock and roll history. Starting out life in 1969 as one of the least-regarded and oft-overlooked bands of their era (despite some impressive album sales figures and sold-out concert stands), by the time they had reached the apparent end of their historic run (yeah, we've heard that before) in the summer of 2004, the unit consisting of vocalist Ozzy Osbourne, guitarist Tony Iommi, bassist Geezer Butler and drummer Bill Ward had emerged as perhaps the most important heavy metal band of all-time, a group that in look, sound and attitude provided the bounds within which the heavy metal form could grow and prosper. Without question, through the sheer determination of their actions, as well as their steadfast belief in the most basic of metal ideals—that loud guitars do indeed rule the world-Sabbath has achieved the distinction of being ranked among the most successful and influential acts in metal lore.

As proven by their remarkable success during this last summer's Ozzfest—during which these legendary metal masters appeared in front of nearly a million of their frenzied followers—these hallowed Princes of Darkness have continually shown they still have what it takes to make the metal minions respond with both passion and power, and they have it in abundance. So what if they may no longer exude the devil-may-care attitude that made such early album stand-outs as **Sabbath Bloody Sabbath** and **Paranoid** foundational blocks in the metal pantheon? After all these years, and more death-defying exploits than most of us even want to consider, let alone experience, these time-tested veterans have something

even more important at their disposal. They have the smarts, the knowledge, the talent and perhaps most significantly, the desire to still make the kind of hard rock music that most younger acts can only dream of creating.

ing.
"I believe I do finally understand what makes Sabbath special," Iommi said. "For a long time I never even wanted to consider that notion: I wanted the focus to be placed

on the music itself. Only over the last few years have I allowed myself the luxury of looking of what might be termed the bigger picture. It takes more than determination to keep a band like Sabbath going for so long. That goes beyond the experience and the friendships. The four of us have known each other for more than 35 years now, and there are times when we seem to just instantly know what each other is thinking— especially when it comes to music.

Certainly anyone with a true understanding of hard rock's musical roots realizes how important a role Black Sabbath has played in shaping the sound, style and substance of the heavy metal form From their moment of transformation in the heady, hippie late '60s from Earth into Black Sabbath (taking their name from a classic Boris Karloff horror movie), these British bashers have remained determined to take rock music on a dark sojourn to where it had never gone before. Lacking the ethereal blues passion of Led Zeppelin or the fleet-fingered pop leanings of Deep Purple, Sabbath's sound went in a new direction, choosing to remove any semblance of light-hearted musical musings from their approach in favor of pure metallic overkill. While the group's efforts occasionally did display a surprising degree of sophistication and even subtlety, their legacy was to be one of pure, unadulterated power! Such songs as Iron Man, War Pigs, Fairies Wear Boots and Paranoid became mid-'70s radio staples, in the process turning these four unassuming, blue collar lads into an international phe-

"If anyone thinks we started doing this to become famous they're crazy," Ozzy said. "We did it because we came from a dark, industrial town where the only thing to do was work in the factories. That wasn't for us. We would have done just about anything to avoid that fate."

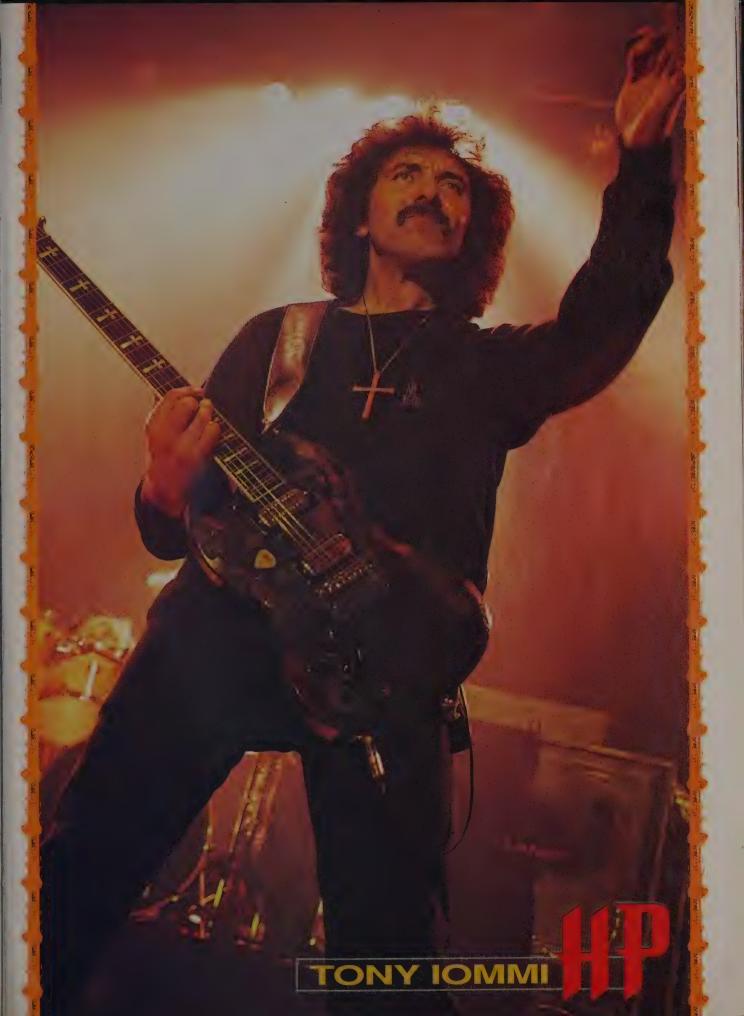
The fact is that by now any metal fan worth his weight in guitar picks knows the story of Black Sabbath. But, for the uninitiated, here's a brief synopsis: Formed in the industrial center of

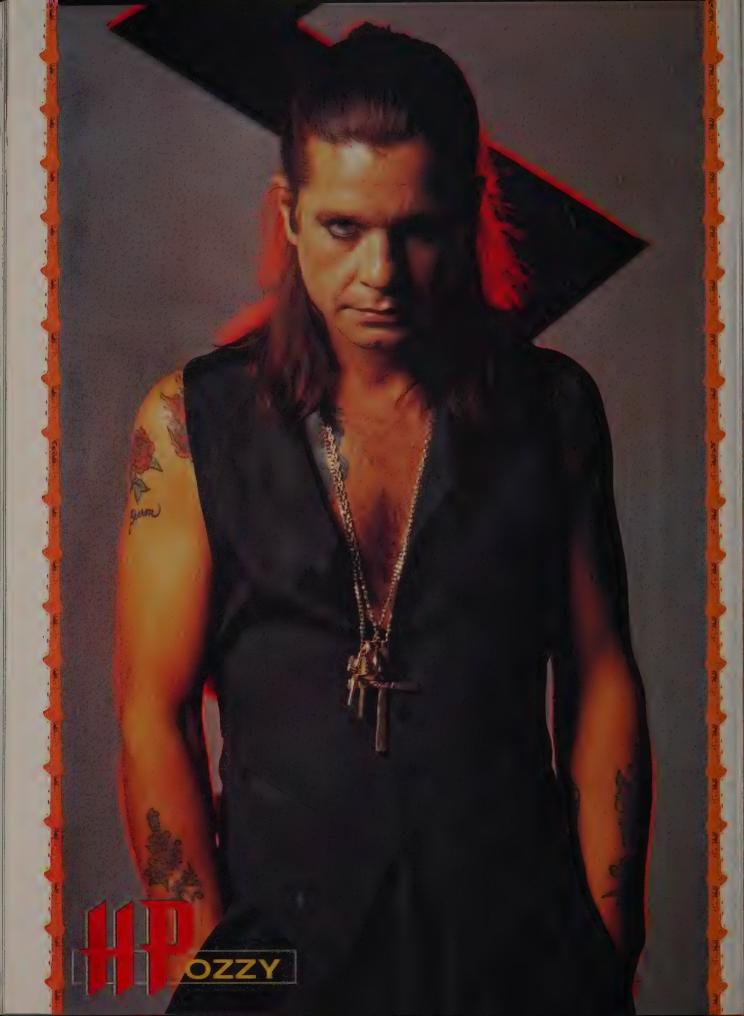
Birmingham, England, the band quickly established themselves as the heaviest of groups with such classic albums as **Black Sabbath** and **Master Of Reality**. Derided by critics, the band found an instant home within the hearts of the world's disenfranchised youth, many of whom found in the band's overwhelming sounds a release for their own pent-up hostilities and frustrations. Internal problems, mostly due to drugs and

drink, caused the band to break asunder in 1979, with Osbourne launching his highly successful solo career and Sabbath struggling to regain former glories with a string of vocalists including Ronnie James Dio (twice), Tony Martin, future Badlands singer Ray Gillen and even (for one disc and tour) Deep Purple frontman lan Gillan. At one point in the mid-'90s, Sabbath was little more than lommi and a succession of session players, and the

"The four of us have known each other for more than 35 years now, and there are times when we seem to just instantly know the each other is thinking."







band's musical output suffered noticeably. The original Sabbath lineup reformed once in 1985 for a brief appearance at *Live Aid* but continuing bitterness and lingering substance problems derailed any reformation talk at that time.

Then in the late '90s, after nearly two decades apart, Ozzy agreed to rejoin the Sab fold—but this time he was holding all the cards. Feeling that he had lost out on a fortune by being forced out of the band back in '79, he agreed to a series of full-scale reformations (which, unfortunately, has yet to include a new album), most of which have taken place at Osburne's own yearly metal-packed extravaganza. Ozzfest. The results of these actions have manged to introduce Sabbath to a new generation of fans (a move made easier by the recent release of all the group's Ozz-era discs in the appropriately titled Black Box set.) Their reformation also served to raise the Sabs to the enviable position of standing as virtual patron saints to an entire array of today's top metal attractions. Indeed, without the band's pervasive influence, the metal form as we know it today would not, and could not exist! And while Sabbath must now wait to see what 2005 and beyond hold in store for them, they can rest assured that their position atop the metal pantheon has never been more appreciated or more secure.

"There were many times when I assumed that Sabbath had run its course," Iommi said. "I

course," lommi said. "I may have always hoped that we would all get together again, but I didn't really know if it could happen. Then we had a bit of a false start at it back in 1994, and after that I believed that it would take nothing short of a miracle for the four of us to get back together. But I guess we are proof that miracles can—and do—happen."

Despite being uneasy about not knowing, or controlling, Sabbath's future fate, lommi is certainly appearing quite content—almost happy—these days.

To be honest, that's not

the way Black Sabbath's somewhat sinister guitarist likes to be portrayed. After all, images of laughter and smiles just don't seem to coexist that well with Sabbath's legendary propensity for creating the darkest, death, doom and destruction-laced metal this side of Hades. But with his on-again, off-again reuniting with Osbourne, Butler and Ward working so well, lommi can't help but let his legendary stoic veneer drop every once in a while. While some long-time Sab observers expressed their belief as recently as the summer of '04 that the group's current "reunion" was doomed due to the member's still-larger-than-life egos, the fact of the matter is that attitudes within the Sab fold appeared to be nothing but pure contentment for the entire length of their latest Fest run. In fact, lommi admits that all seemed so sunny and bright in Sabbath's often-gloom-laden universe as they wound up their latest \*Ozzfest\* run that dismantling the band at this particular time seemed to be nothing short of a crime against rock and roll nature.

"This band has performed nobly over the last few months," he said. "I think there were initially some questions stemming from Ozzy's health and the minimal time that we had to prepare. But Ozz is Ozz, and he grew stronger as we went along—as did the music. The only unfortunate element as far as I'm concerned is that we won't be going into the studio to make new music. I would love to see that

Despite his frustrations concerning his on-going inability to get Sabbath back into the recording studio, it is understandable that lommi takes particular pleasure from the recent run of good fortune that has come Sabbath's way. After all, at countless points over the last 35 years, it was lommi who was left to pick up the pieces and

keep the Sabbath machine rolling along it's not-so-merry way. To his credit, despite a dizzying array of personnel changes (which at one point or another saw more than 20 different musicians appear under the Black Sabbath banner), and the eventual loss of big-time U.S. album distribution, lommi did keep Sabbath alive. And when the Sab's prodigal son, Ozzy, decided to put aside his solo career (at least temporarily) and resume his Sab career in 1996, it seemed as if all the years of leading Sabbath through the heavy metal desert were worthwhile. The decades that lommi had struggled to keep the group's musical ship headed in the right direction suddenly— and somewhat surprisingly— became richly rewarded.

"I was as surprised as anyone when Ozzy originally agreed to work with Sabbath again," lommi said. "There were some very deep wounds left from the late '70s and early '80s, and I don't know if either Ozzy or I were convinced that we could overcome the problems we had. His ego was still strong, and so was mine. There was still some tension when we first all got together prior to working again. I think we were all trying to be on our best behavior, and that's not the proper way to act when you're trying to see if you can work together again. We brought up all the old problems, and as we discussed them the tension seemed to disappear."

Soon after settling their past difficulties, the reunited unit set out

on the road as part of Osbourne's 1997 Ozzfest. The response to the group's music was so strong, so totally overwhelming. that the quartet had virtually no option other than to keep rockin' on. By tour's end they had returned to their home town of Birmingham, to record the two shows that eventually wound up comprising Reunion, the first live album ever released by the original Sab quartet. Amazingly, some three decades after their formation, and some 18 years after breaking asun-

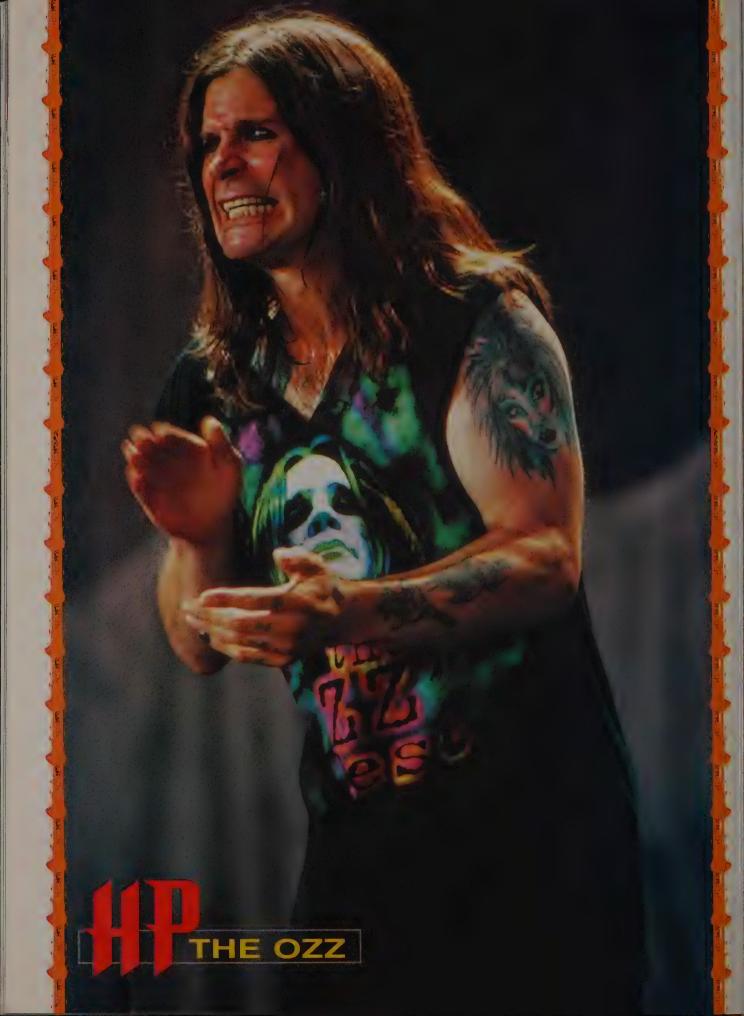
Black Sabbath:
"We share so much...
we are a brotherhood."

der, the Black Sabbath heavy metal machine was clearly back in topnotch working order.

But as has seemingly always been the case with Sabbath, no matter how good things may appear, a darkness often lurks right under the surface. Just when lommi felt that a reunited Sabbth would be an on-going venture, the stark reality that such decisions were out of his control was thrust in his face. Now both Ozzy and his wife/manager Sharon were calling the shots, and for the next seven years—right up through their 2004 Ozzfest run—it seemed as if Sabbath's big guns would be pulled out of metallic mothballs only when, and if, they were needed... mostly to aid Ozzy's career aspirations.

Indeed, their most recent performances occurred only after Ozzy's 2003 ATV accident (captured for the world to see in his hit MTV series, *The Osbournes*), derailed his intentions of recording a solo disc and headlining the '04 Ozzfest on his own. When it became clear that the Ozz would require a bit of a musical foil to mask his physical limitations during the tour, the decision was made to unfurl the mighty Sabbath banner once again. And while lommi was thrilled by the chance to once again bring the band's classic sound alive, he freely admits his frustrations over not knowing what may lie ahead for the unit that has for so-long served as the central factor of his

"I would like to know what may happen with the band in the future," he said. "For all I know that was it for Sabbath after Ozzfest. Now I have to wait for Ozzy and Sharon to decide what they want to do next. It is frustrating, but I am appreciative of every opportunity I have to play Sabbath music. I only wish I could promise the fans that it will happen again very soon."



As the world anxiously watches and waits to see what the next move in the always-unpredictable Sabbath chess game might be, some undeniable facts remain. Certainly, there are bands active on today's hard rock scene who play even meaner, leaner, nastier metal than Sabbath, but few can match the breadth and scope of the metal mashings that have been this band's stock and trade for the last 35 years. The all-encompassing aura of Sabbath, especially the one-and-only original Sabbath, remains as strong today as it was when such discs as **Never Say Die** and **Vol. 4** first helped establish the band's stellar rep so many years ago. Somewhat ironically, when asked about today's generation of metallers, many of whom —ranging from Slipknot to Rammstein to Sepultura—cite Sabbath as a major influence, lommi was less than intrigued.

But his words also reflected the position he now understands that Sabbath holds within metal's Mount Olympus.

"Some I like, some I'm not particularly fond of, but most I haven't even heard," he said. "I guess you're always honored when another musician says you've been an influence on them, but I think the original is always more interesting than those who follow. I'm certainly not saying that there aren't newer bands around who are playing very interesting music. But there was always much more to Sabbath than just playing loud or playing fast. Some of the young bands don't seem to realize that. For too many of them, volume is a be-all, end-all and that just can't be. In my mind, what we do is unique. There will always be only one Black Sabbath."



## THE OZZ ROARS!

HP: Is it hard for you to believe that you've been in the public spotlight making music for 35 years now?

OO: When people asked me in the early days with Sabbath where l'd be ten years from now, I told them that I didn't know. Ten years after that, just about the time I left Sabbath and went on my own, they asked me where I'd be ten years from now, and again I told 'em that I didn't know. It's amazing to me to think that 35 years have passed—but it's just as amazing that so much of today's music seems to be a throw-back to the '60s. I just have to laugh when a 15 year old kid comes up to me and asks me what the Sabbath song Symptom Of The Universe is really about and what I was thinking about when we recorded it. How do I know? I was drunk or

**HP:** But it seems as if the mystique around Sabbath is greater today than ever before.

stoned, lying on the floor someplace

when I did it.

**00:** That's true. But I don't really understand that mystique. It's not like we had some magical formula. I imagine it's true that the four of us, as a unit, created some great music. But believe me,

we never thought, "Oh, in 35 years kids are gonna look back on us as the icons of our time." That's absolutely ridiculous. Kids still know me as Ozzy from Sabbath, and while that makes me very happy, the fact is that my solo disc have outsold what I did with Sabbath probably ten-to-one. It's kind of like what happened to Paul McCartney after he left the Beatles. I guess some people will always know me from Sabbath, and that's fine with me. I know the fans want to heat me do those songs.

HP: Over the years you've received almost as much attention for your off-stage antics as for what you've accomplished musically. Does that bother you?

OO: It gets a little tiring at times, Just the other day I was going through the airport in New York and somebody asked me, "aren't you the guy who bit the head off the rat?" I told him, "No, you idiot, it was a bat!" Sure it can be annoying after all these years, but I'm used to those questions over and over again by now. I don't regret doing that or anything else I've ever done. I've gotten a lot of mileage out of the bat! I've also been criticized for talking so much about drinking and getting high. I'm not

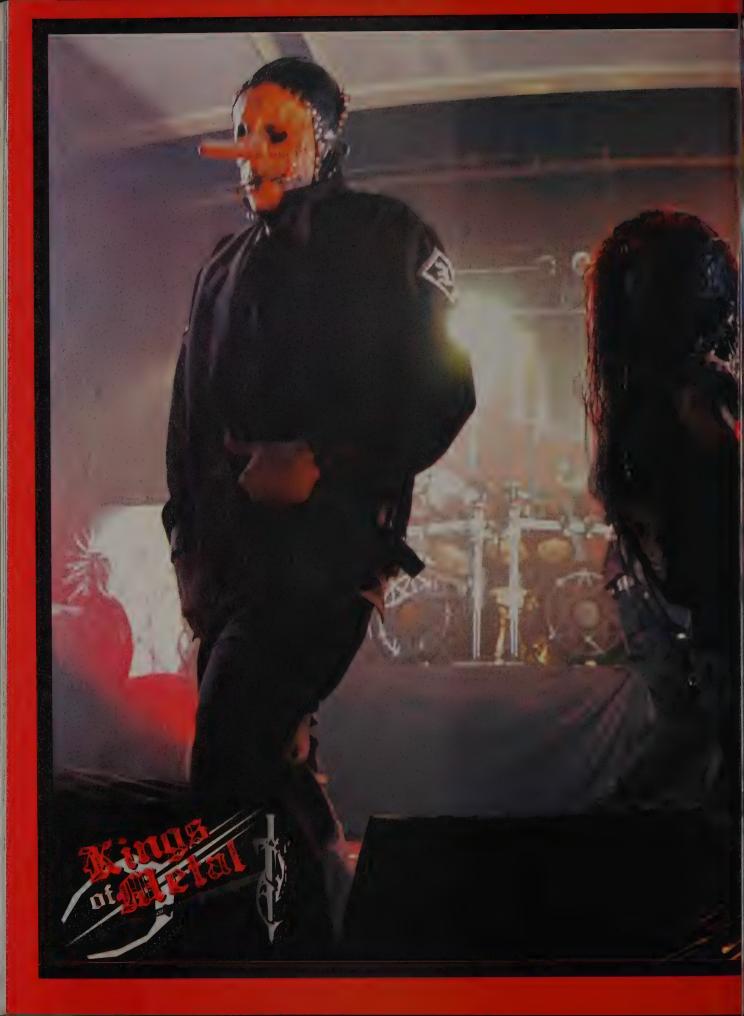
here to condone drugs or alcohol, but I'm not going to condemn it either. I did it, and I don't deny it. I'm sorry I did it, but don't regret anything! I wouldn't do a thing differently if they gave me my entire life back to me.

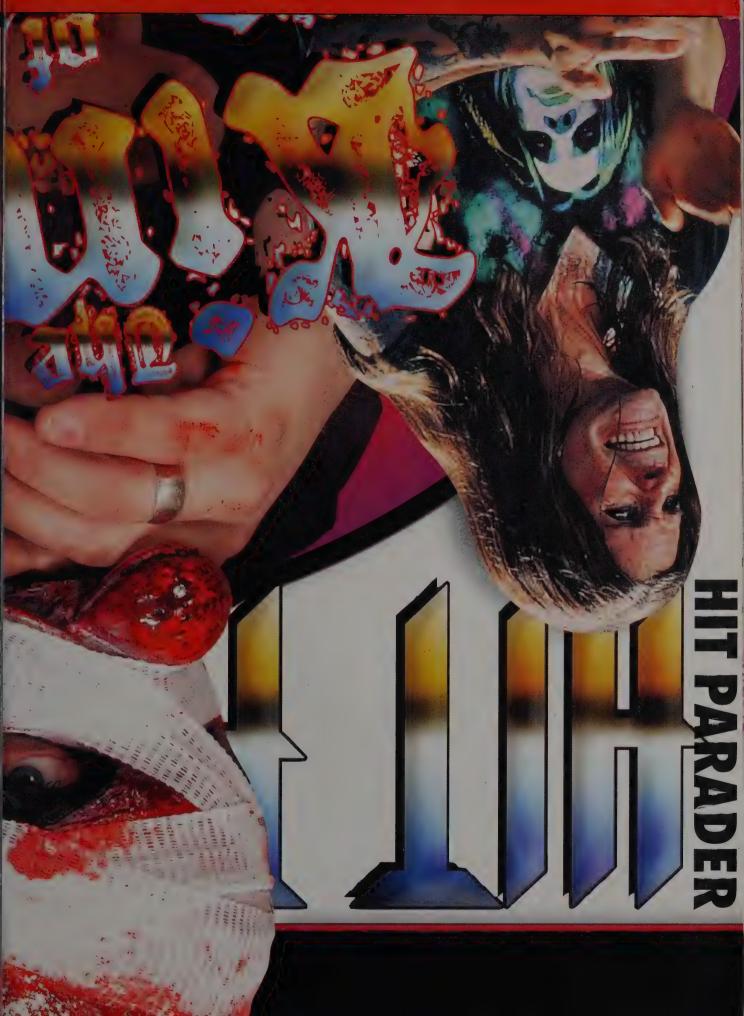
HP: If there was one moment in your life you could take back what would it be?

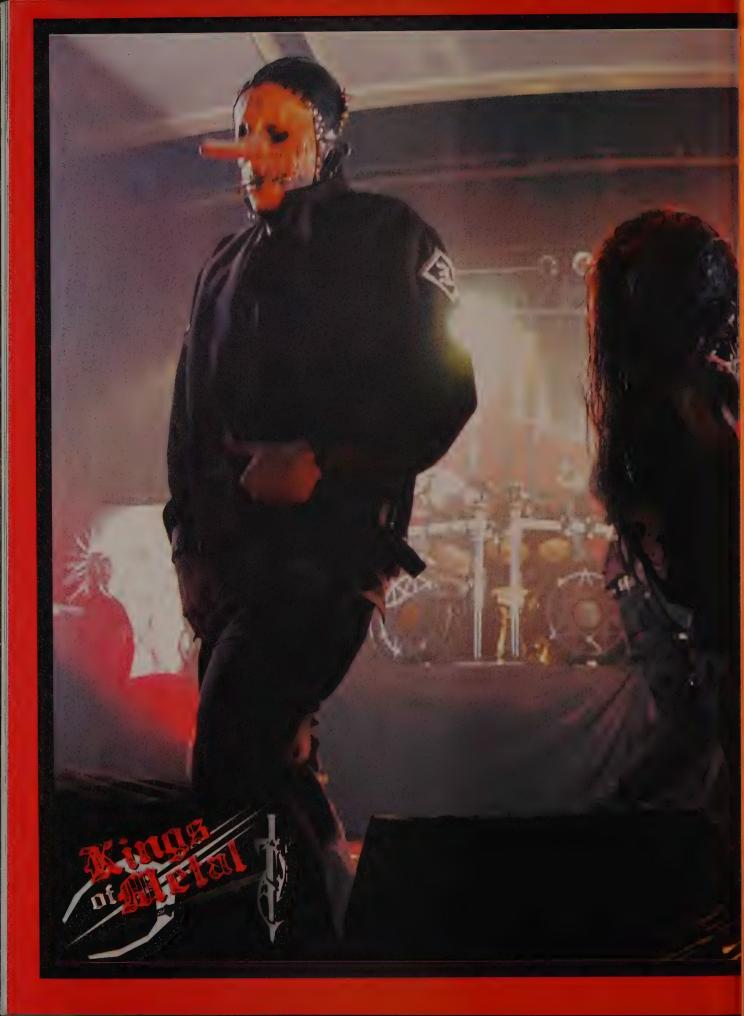
O0: As I said, I wouldn't take back anything I've ever done. But if I was given the chance to take something back, it would be what happened to Randy Rhoads. 20 years have now passed since he died, yet I still think about him every, single day. He was the nicest, most talented guy I've ever known, and what happened to him was such a tragedy. That plane going down, and Randy being killed, was definitely one of the lowest points of my life.

HP: You mention Randy's death as being a low point, but what has been the high point for you over the last 35 years?

OC: That's almost impossible to say. There have been so many high points, and so many low points too. You wouldn't be able to tell the high points if it wasn't for the low points— everything would just blend together. It's all been an amazing ride, a truly incredible experience.







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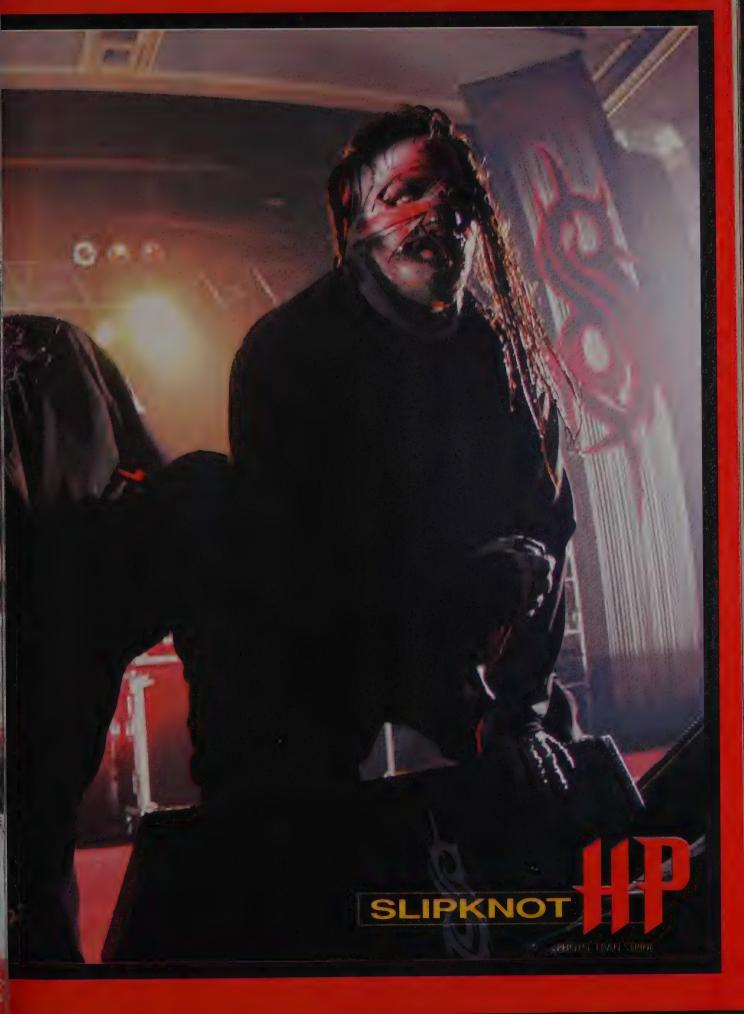
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### Riff Rock's Master Blasters

BY ROB ANDREWS

o one in the rock world had ever seen anything quite like it before. The year was 1978 and AC/DC were on their first tour of the United States. They had already created quite a splash in Europe where their blistering three-chord guitar anthems had been welcomed with open arms by the Continent's rock-starved masses. Few on this side of the "Big Pond", however, had a clue about this Aussie assault force, although rumors abounded that they were led by a supposedly "demonic" schoolboy and a bare chested, tattooed vocalist with a voice that sounded like he had gargled on smashed glass. All soon were to discover the unique musical magic that has since enthralled two generations of rock fans—

the magic of AC/DC.

As soon as the band hit the stage at 8 PM sharp as the opening act for a now-forgotten headliner, the lucky few who had gathered for the poorly advertised event at New York's Palladium Theater knew they were witnessing something special. There stood Angus Young, in all his knock-kneed glory, toting a cherry red Gibson SG that at times seemed bigger than he was. The show had barely begun, but already the pintsized axe demon was sweating like he had just gone 15 tough rounds with the lightweight champion

of the world. The songs came in rapid-fire order—barely giving the audience time to grasp and absorb the sonic assault that was coming their way. Each tune was raw, rude

and rocking, a far cry from the "corporate" hard rock style that was dominating that era's chart action. From first note to last Angus was a whirling dervish, a non-stop cyclone of frenetic activity, as he rolled on the floor, pranced about the stage, and finally, climactically, dashed to the arena's upper deck in midsong (Angus was one of the first guitarist to go "wireless"—out of necessity) while never missing a lick.

While all this was going on, his alter ego, the craggy-faced frontman, Bon Scott, stood virtually motion-less— except, of course, when he either picked up the microphone to sing or lifted a handy bottle of Jack Daniels to drink. As chaos ensued around him, Bon remained the epitome of cool, collected calm. It was as if the burly Scott was most at home on the concert stage, belting out the band's blue-collar anthems of love, lust and back door men as Angus caused a frenzy on all sides surrounding him. While Scott appeared old enough to be the father of Angus and his rhythm guitarist brother, Malcolm, there was an apparent camaraderie and an understanding between them that instantly told all who witnessed the show that this was more than just another rock and

roll band— this was a hard rockin' "family."

"Bon was the guy who really taught us every-thing," Angus said. "He had been around a lot more than we had, so he was the one who always kind of took charge of things. When we first came over to America we didn't know what to expect. I had already been play-ing in bands for years—and in some very tough places throughout Australia. But once our albums started to come out, and we started to tour the world, everything started happening so fast. Without Bon there to guide us

through, I don't know if we would have survived the first few years." Regrettably, just as AC/DC was

Regrettably, just as AC/DC was reaching their commercial peak in the early '80s, after albums like

High Voltage, Powerage and Highway To Hell had begun to knock down every barrier placed in their path, Bon Scott's life came to an abrupt and unexpected end. Apparently the hard drinking, hard living vocalist had decided to camp out in the back seat of his car after a particularly heavy night of imbibing. A cold snap came through, and before morning, Scott had passed on due to overexposure. Almost instantly Scott was



"We've seen so many tends come and go. And the best part is that we've managed to stay happily oblivious of all of them."



transformed by the rock media from being an occasionally maligned source of amusement into one of the patron saints of the burgeoning hard rock form. But at the same time. Angus and the boys were left without their spiritual and physical leader. They didn't know what to do. After years of just getting on stage and letting the chips fall where they may, AC/DC were facing the first true crisis of their career. For a number of months they considered breaking up the band. But finally cooler heads prevailed:

"That was an incredibly hard time for us," Angus recalled. "When Bon died, we really didn't know what to do. We had just started having some real success due to Highway To Hell, and everything seemed to be going our way. Then all of a sudden Bon was gone, and so were a lot of our dreams.3

After a lengthy period of emotional recovery and introspection, the band decided to hire former Geordie vocalist Brian Johnson and head almost immediately back into the recording studio. They wanted to keep as busy as possible in order to keep the heartbreaking memories of Scott out of their minds. Almost as if to wash the tragic event out of their systems, the band chose to record their entire next album as a homage to Scott, little knowing that the disc in question, Back in Black, would soon emerge as one of the landmark achievements in rock and roll history. The album, spurred on by songs like the title track and Hells Bells, proceeded to sell over 10 million copies world-wide, establishing AC/DC as the biggest hard rock band anywhere. While, more than two decades later, Angus still has trouble fully comprehending the band's "overnight" success, he knows that Bon would have been proud

'What happened with Back In Black was simply amazing," he said. "Everything just came together. Obviously there was a lot of interest in the band because of Bon's death, and we threw every bit of emotion we were feeling into that album. All the songs had a rather somber feel to them, but there was anger too. In a strange way, we were really mad at Bon for putting us through all that. For his part, Brian was a real trooper. He was stepping into a very difficult spot, but he handled it very well.

Indeed, as AC/DC hit the road for their first headlining tour of arenas, Johnson's appearance on stage was frequently met with cries of "We Want Bon." Rather than being offended, or concerned, by the crowd's response, the heavily-accented resident



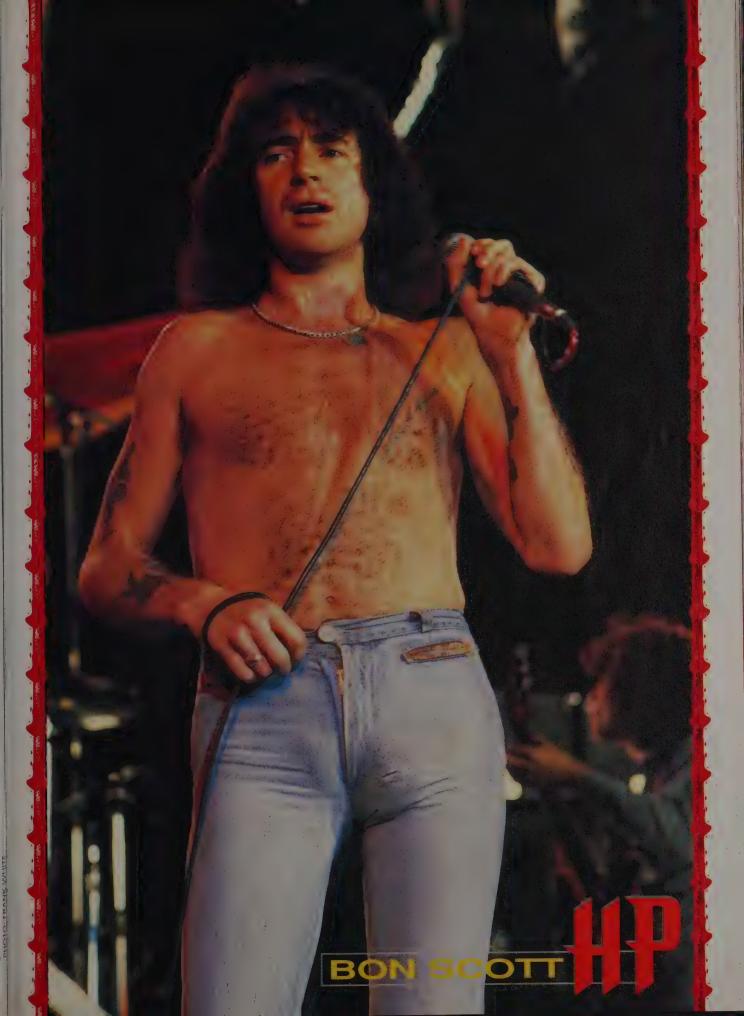
of Glasgow simply replied "I want Bon, too." From there, however, things only got better, by tour's end, AC/DC had hit a musical peak that they had never achieved with the charismatic but unpredictable Scott. Angus further established himself as one of the most inventive and entertaining guitar forces in rock history, and the band's reputation quickly evolved into the unmatched masters of riff rock.

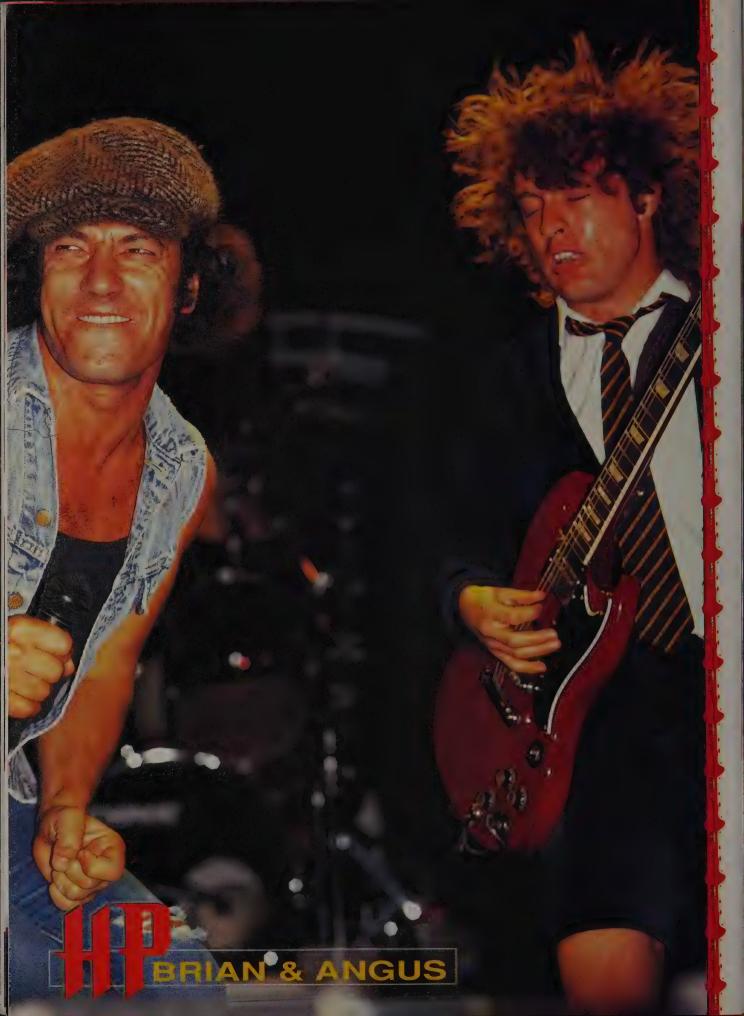
"It was incredible the way the fans accepted both AC/DC and Brian following Bon's death," Angus recalled. "They could have rejected us. They could have believed that the best was over... and maybe it was. But they stayed loyal to us, so we felt it only proper to stay just as loyal to them."

By the late-'80s, as AC/DC's commercial fortunes continued to rise. countless young bands began to emerge, each trying to capture at least

some element of AC/DC's special magic. Inevitably, they all failed. They might have grabbed one element or another of the group's superficially simplistic style, but they all seemed to miss completely on capturing the unique internal chemistry that had always made AC/DC so special. And over the ensuing years through albums like For Those About To Rock, Fly On The Wall and Flick Of The Switch, and Ball Breaker, the Thunder From Down Under continually set the standards against which every fun-loving, riff-rocking band had to be measured. And just as surely as each AC/DC disc would feature that ever-so-familiar approach to rock and roll, the wait between discs began getting longer and longer.

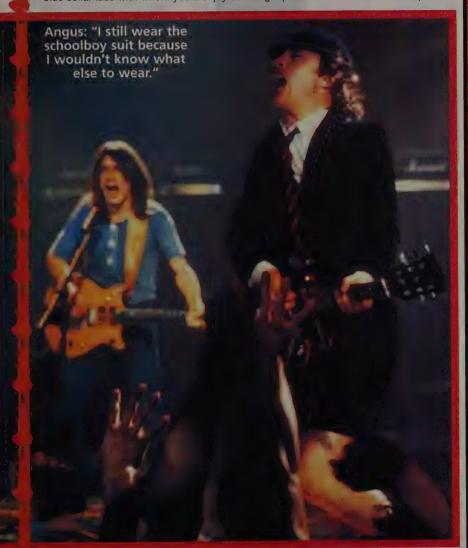
Never the fastest-working band in the land, in the 21st Century AC/DC's work rate has slowed to a veritable crawl. In 2001 the band released their most recent collection, Stiff Upper Lip, and a year later they left Warner Music—their home for more than 25 years—to sign a new deal with Epic Records. We're still waiting to experience the first tangible result of that signing. But Angus promises that we shouldn't give up hope new AC/DC music is on the way! And we know one thing for sure-whenever that new album does arrive, it will have been well-worth waiting for! After nearly 30 years of creating an unmatched musical legacy, and helping to establish a brand of rock and roll that will seemingly live on forever, what possibly does AC/DC feel that they still have to contribute to the musical form they love do dearly? Such a question just brings a knowing smile to Angus' mischievous face.





"We're going to do what we always do," he said. "We've seen so many trends come and go. And the best part is that we've managed to stay happily oblivious of all of them. We don't sit around dissecting the latest songs on the radio. I don't even think we listen to them! If I want inspiration, I'll go back to an old blues album. If we tried to change now, we'd make fools of ourselves. If we're going to look like fools, we're going to do it our way! As I said, we're just going to do what we do. And I think we can still do it better than anybody else. That's not bragging—that's just a fact!"

A fact, indeed! Through thick and thin, good times and bad, AC/DC have survived and prospered, giving us all a unique taste of rock and roll that only they could provide. They are the unquestioned kings of heavy riff rock—a band that has done more with a basic three-chord arrangement than any other group in rock history. These have never been the haughty Rock Gods like Zeppelin and Sabbath. Rather, these are the blue collar lads with whom you'd enjoy downing a pint with down at the corner pub.



For AC/DC, rock and roll has never been a quest for artistic evolution or creative fulfillment; it's been about perfecting the one thing that they've always done better than anyone. It worked in 1978, it worked in 1988, it worked in 1998, and we have no doubt that it will work just as well in 2008!

"I think one of the things I've always been most proud of is that a song we recorded back in the early days with Bon still sounds just as good today," Angus said. "And I'm equally proud that whether it was a song from early on, or something you hear from our next album, you'll know it's an AC/DC song as soon as you hear it. We've never been about trying to fool people or be something other than what we are. We know our strengths, and we know our weaknesses... and by now we're far too old to change either of them!"

Quite simply, to anyone with even the slightest sense of rock history, AC/DC will always hold a very special place in their hearts. They are that rarest of rock and roll "beasts", a band that truly is unique. AC/DC still stands as the best at what they do; the best that was, the best that is and the best that will ever be.

They are AC/DC— the Thunder From Down Under.

# AC/DC ALBUM PROFILES

down with the inimitable Angus Young to get his comments on the key albums of AC/DC's historic

real toe-tapping, good rock and roll album. That's about the easiest way to describe it. Back then we could go into the studio, work for like 48 straight hours and emerge with something interesting. I almost wish things were that simple today.

IIGHWAY TO HELL (1979): Even now thinking about the fact that it was our last album with 80n—though none of us knew it at the time—makes me sad. But it is an incredible album that sounds amazing when you crank it up in a car. I remember hearing it one day as I drove past some kids who were blasting it on their car stereos, and I thought to myself, "Hey, that's a pretty good album."

IN BLACK (1980): There was so much emotion going on during the making of that album. We really didn't know what we had. Was it good? Was it bad? We really couldn't tell. Then Brian came in rather late in the proceedings and really put his stamp on it. Mutt Lange, who produced that album, is such a perfectionist— really a sharp contrast to my brother George. He really put us through our paces, but it was exactly what we

Ahnhh... the cannons. That's what everyone seems to remember. I imagine that it gets overshadowed in the minds of some people by Back In Black, but I think it really stands apart. Our second venture with Mutt, and a very worthwhile one for all involved.

where we took our turn at producing things. This is an album I've always been particularly fond of. I'm not sure why I feel that way, but I really like it. The title kind of said it all—we went in and just flicked the switch. This is the music that came out.

What can I say? It sums up who and what we are as a band, and it's a salute to Bon, who remains the heart and soul of this band. . even today. I like to think that we've been a good, solid rock and rol band for a long time, and this album helps prove that point.



BY BERT JOHNSON

prove our point.'

here's something strangely reassuring about the notion of Iron Maiden once again being major players upon the rock and roll stage. Maybe it's the fact that after 25 years of putting the pedal to the metal, these quintessential British bashers remain a true international phenomenon. Maybe it's

that amid an ever-changing hard rock scene, a place where new styles, sounds and influences seem to

emerge on an almost daily basis, Maiden's back-to-basics heaviness stands as a vibrant link to hard rock's glorious past. Or maybe it's just that having legendary vocalist Bruce Dickinson well situated back in the Maiden mix along-side bassist Steve Harris, drummer Nicko McBrain and quitarists Adrian Smith, Dave Murray and Janick Gers gives anyone with a sense for metal history a warm feeling deep in their hearts and souls. Indeed, much of that history-or at least the seminal stages of it-has recently been made evident for all to see in the group's DVD set, History of Iron
Maiden Part 1: The Early Years, on
which early '80s concert footage, and classic videos for songs such as Run To The Hills and The Trooper are gathered together in one extreme-

ly impressive package. This DVD captures Maiden at a very important stage of our career," Harris said. "It will be followed by other DVD sets that display other eras of the band's development. It's all very exciting

for us.

The simple fact is that few bands have ever represented the metal medium with more sincerity, skill and devotion than Iron Maiden. From early discs like Killers through classic efforts like Powerslave and The Number of the Beast, this unit has stayed unyeildingly true to the metal cause, continually delivering the mega-decibel goods as few bands have done before or since. All that is why the appearance of any new Maiden DVD or album, or the announcement of any scheduled world tour will be warmly wel-

comed by the band's ever-loyal fans around the globe. And it now clearly appears that in 2005 we all may just be seeing such an album... and such a tour!

'We're not trying to reinvent ourselves at this point in or career,"



Iron Maiden: Bigger than ever, 25 years into their historic career.



has been about—well, we'll travel wherever those fans might be to Throughout the band's long history they have always taken particular pride in their willingness and ability to pack arenas in distant and exotic ports-ofcall around the globe. Indeed, over the last 25 years, Maiden has played in places that few other bands even know exist. They've pioneered hard rock tours in Eastern Europe (initially doing so before the walls of communist repression came tumbling down), and their road sojourns into infrequently visited parts of Asia and South America have become the stuff of rock and roll legend. But at the same time. Maiden's roving eye has occasionally left American fans out in the cold, with the band's distinctly pro-world stance often confusing and confounding those who believe the rock and roll uni-

Dickinson said. "We're trying to do what Maiden

does best. But at the same time, this is never going to dissolve into

some sort of 'retro' project. Hopefully, Maiden will always appeal to a

new generation of people who come along in rock and roll every few

years. Perhaps those fans have wondered what all the excitement

verse begins and ends on U.S.

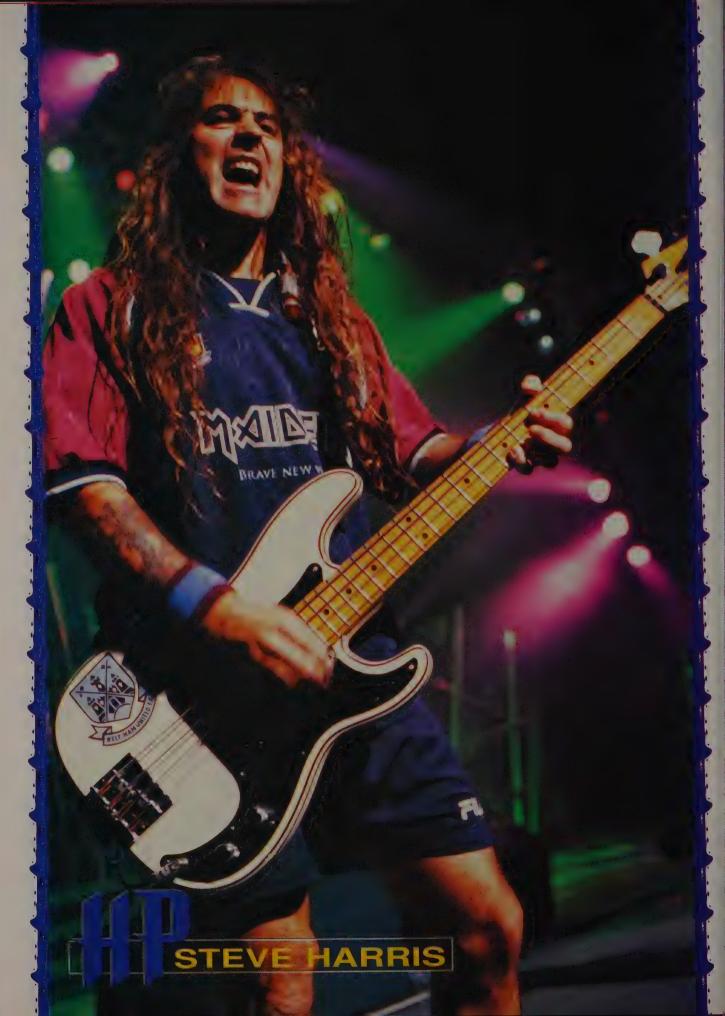
shores.

"We've always found it somewhat amusing how American journalists can't seem to comprehend why we want to tour around the world," Dickinson said. "They seem to believe that Cleveland, Dallas and New York are the center of everything. Well, to our way of thinking, the fans in Rio de Janeiro, in Tokyo and in Prague have just as much of a right to be entertained as anyone. I would imagine that we've spent more time touring the States than any other single place, but sometimes that's just not good enough to please

everybody."
Indeed it has been the band's ability to pack arenas from Hong Kong to Houston that has made them a highly viable (and unusual) commodity in the 21st Century rock world. Without

doubt, some within the rock community thought the Maiden members were slightly out of their English heads when they announced their intentions to play the biggest arenas in America on their last few tours. But much to the shock of those who believed that "arena





rock" died out with the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the group's sold-out status spoke loudly and proudly about the on-going validity of their approach. After all, few hard rock acts of recent vintage— even those currently at the height of their fame and fortune— felt powerful enough to book an arena tour amidst the current rock environment. And, let's face it, even the most optimistic among us would agree that Iron Maiden are not currently at the apex of their long and often glorious career. So why...how...where... when...did the Maiden Metal Machine ever get the notion that they still had hundreds of thousands of fans out there, all anxiously awaiting for the opportunity to once again see their heroes on the concert stage?

"That's the reason we do this," Dickinson said with an impish grin. "It was to make some great music and show everyone that while our type of heavy metal may have been out of the public eye over the last few

vears, it's never really gone away."

Maiden's unique approach to marketing themselves has paid some hefty dividends for the band during their two-and-a-half decade career. In addition to chalking up a string of platinum selling albums like Number Of The Beast and Piece Of Mind (whose covers, like all of the group's albums, featured Maiden's bizarre, corpse-like mascot, Eddie), the band has won a hard-earned reputation as one of the best live acts on earth. Of course. playing an average of over 200 shows a year, year-in and year-out is bound to make any group pretty damn good, and considering the Maiden Metal Machine's ever-

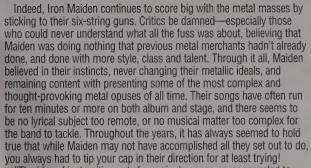
changing lineup, they needed as much time together on stage as they

Here's a band that has gone through no less than a dozen different members since their formation in 1979. Even Harris (the only remaining original member) has lost track of exactly who was in the band at any given time, and on what tour who joined the group. To refresh the bassist's memory, the band's "classic" lineup featured Harris, drummer Clive Burr, Dickinson (who had replaced original vocalist Paul Di'Anno) and guitarists Smith and Murray. It was this unit that launched Maiden in 1980 into what was then referred to as The New Wave Of British Heavy Metal—along with such other budding stars as Def Leppard, Saxon and the Tygers of Pan Tang—and helped establish a no-nonsense approach that soon won the band a dedicated following around the globe.

"When we first came on the scene, our kind of music was just totally out of fashion," Harris said. "In some ways, it's similar to the way the music scene is now. The bands that were popular in England at the time were more of the pop variety, and metal groups were looked upon as dinosaurs whose time had come and gone. But what those people didn't realize was that there was a new generation of bands that had grown up listening to Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, and they were ready to start making their own music— and we were one of them. The fans know what we're about—and that's why they've stayed loyal."

Loyal, indeed! As soon as Maiden takes to the concert stage anywhere on Planet Earth, it often seems as if everyone present has been caught up in an intergalactic time warp and transported back to metal's late-'80s halcyon age. The hair is long, the pants are tight, and the music is loud. Blending classic tracks like *Two Minutes To Midnight* and *Run To The Hills* with recent faves like *The Wicker Man*, Maiden always pulls out all the stops during their two-hour set, delivering a veritable "greatest hits" package that has the massive crowd eating out of their hand from the opening guitar salvo. With Dickinson prowling the stage like a man possessed, and delivering his impassioned vocals with a curlyour-toes intensity, these legendary British bashers continually prove that even with the passing of time they can still deliver the metal goods with unmatched style and power.

"The fans have always been amazing to us," Dickinson explained. 
"That's why I'm not that surprised by how well things continue to go for us on tour. We are all extremely thankful about it, but we know that our fans are always there to support us, and they know that Maiden is there to deliver the kind of music that they most want to hear."



"The idea of just writing cute four minute songs never appealed to

us," said Harris who over the years has remained the band's principle songwriter. "We enjoyed touching on mystical and mythological topics, and placing them right along-side songs that dealt with many of today's most pressing issues. I wrote virtually all of the material on the first albums, then Bruce and Dave started becoming more prominent in that department. We each brought in our work and let it fly. We really enjoyed seeing how interesting and unusual we could make our material, and still keep it as Iron Maiden. That was a big part of the fun for us-there were no rules with our music. We were free to do anything we wanted."



### HARRIS OPENS UP

Steve Harris has always stood at the very core of Iron Maiden's metal machine. While over the decades, the band's vocalists have changed, their drummers have changed, and even their gar arists have gone in-and-out, Harris has remained Maiden's creative rock. But there's more to this intellectual Englishman than playing bass in one of the world's most famous heavy metal bands, read on to find out what other "passions" air Harris' soul.

Hit Paraper: Steve, what do you like to do with your free time away from music?

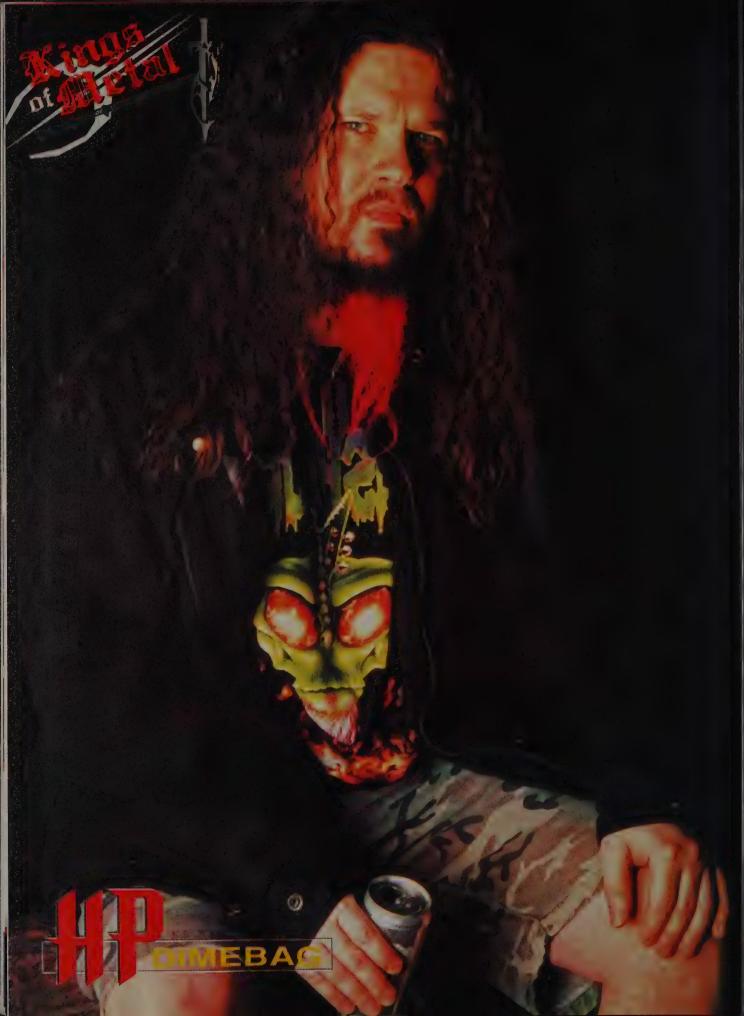
Steve Harris: Of course I love spending as much time as possible with my family. After all, being on tour as much as we are I welcome the chance to just relax with the kids and spend time with them. On a personal level, I'm still very much into sports. I follow my soccer team, West Ham United, very closely, and I also enjoy playing teams. Photography has also become something very important for me. I really enjoy that

HP: Is there one kind of photography that's your particular passion?

SH: I enjoy shooting pictures of my kids, of course. But that's just a proud parent speaking. It also unjoy shooting landscapes which is a nice hobby to have when you're on the road so much. You look out the window with a different attitude when you're doing it with a photographer's eye.

HP: By the way, how do you keep up with the soccer standing when you're touring the States?

SH: Actually, it's gotten quite a bit easier over the years. Back on our first tours, it was like we were completely cut off from what was going on back home. I'd have to actually call people on the phone in order to find out what happened in the game. Now not only can I follow what a happening on the internet, but I can get videotapes of the games only a day or so after they're played. Also, while America still doesn't cover soccer as much as I'd like, with your cable systems, you do have much more coverage than you used to



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# FUNS'IN ROSES

## The Complete Classic Axl Rose Interview

ew bands in rock and roll history can
ever match the legacy created by Axl Rose, Slash, Izzy
Stradlin, Duff McKagan and Steven Adler during their notorious early-'90s heyday. To many, Guns N' Roses were the
Greatest Show on Earth... a three ring circus featuring
enough death-defying antics to fill a month's worth of soap

opera scripts. To some, these quintessential L.A. wildmen were the ultimate Hollywood vampires, a band that lived by night, and broke every rule in the books in the process. To others, they'll forever remain the greatest band ever produced by the notorious West Coast Metal Explosion of the '80s.

Either way, the fact of the matter is that Guns N' Roses were never particularly comfortable with the notion of merely existing on the rock and

roll scene. It was their intent to hit the music world like a runaway freight train, an uncontrollable force ready, willing and able to blast asunder everything- and everyoneunlucky enough to be standing in their path of destruction. For these guys rock and roll wasn't a musical form as much as it was a lifestyle, a statement of purpose consisting equally of all-night parties, bloody street brawls and an endless stream of wine, women and song. At a time when the rock universe was growing almost jaded with the wild-man, party-hearty rockers who seemed to comprise the entirety of the Los Angeles music orb, Guns N' Roses proved that those other guys had only been pretenders, that they were the only true

rock's most dangerous band. And at the heart of it all was one man the notorious Axl Rose. More than a decade

contenders for the title of hard

after he was at the pinnacle of rock and roll farne, Rose remains one of the most famous, and infamous, names in rock history. Sure he was controversial. Sure he knew how to take things right to the edge—and then occasionally push 'em right on over. But there was apparently always more to Axl Rose than canceling tour dates, inciting riots and creating international incidents. Since he first burst upon the hard rock scene some 15 years ago, he's created a legacy that may well be unmatched in the contemporary rock field. Quite simply, you can't be more famous—or infamous—than Axl Rose has remained... despite not having released an

album in over a decade. It's also no secret that Axi's fiery personality and **Hit Parader** more than occasionally clashed over the years. He's "serenaded" us in song on *Get Into The Ring*, and taken his share of potshots (fairly or unfairly) at usand we've returned the fire in kind! But back in 1992, at the height of G N'

R mania, Axl decided to bury the hatchet and grant one of his few media interviews. During our lengthy conversation Axl opened up about just about everything—his feud with the press, his hopes for a happy home life and his future musical plans. We figured that this historic interview deserved to be read again in this Kings of Metal special issue—with a little time and history now on our side.

Hit Parader: Is it impossible for you to lead any sort of normal life—to hang out at the mall, to go to a movie?

Axi Rose: Basically life on the road is hotel rooms and planes—unless you have a lot of security with you. It depends on how hectic the city is. If it's not too bad, I can go out with just two security people and have a normal day; go shopping or just walk around. In Bogota, Columbia, it was really hectic. You needed about two

really hectic. You needed about two vans of security people just to move around. It was a nightmare. At this very moment, there are about 500 kids standing in front of the hotel. I went to an antique store down here the other day because I collect antique crucifixes, and it was kind of fun because I ran into a bunch of school girls all dressed in their outfits. They knew who I was, and it was really kind of cute

HP: Is there any place on Earth where you can go and not be recognized?

AR: I don't know. It's rare. I'll go someplace like Portofino, Italy, on vacation, and the next thing I know is that I have to stop eating dinner because there are people all around. Probably the easiest place for me to get around in is L.A. The second is New York—there, they just say "Yo, Ax," and that's it. But they can spot me there no matter what I'm wearing, so I

don't even bother trying a disguise. They just assume that's my new look

Axl Rose:
One of the great
Mystery Men of
metal history.

"I like to be real private; you don't always want everyone around you— even when they like you."

**HP:** How do you find the band's songs evolving as you've played them night after night on the road?

AR: With most of the songs, we put everything we had into them when we recorded them. So each night, whether you're into playing it or not, you have to rise to it. It's still a challenge to get that song right each night. That's what keeps us going. We had to quit the show early the other night— and that's only the third show we've had to cut short for technical reasons or riots, or whatever— and that bothered us a great deal. We still care very deeply about every song we do.

HP: Is there one song in particular that you really look forward to playing each night; and, conversely, is there one you dread performing?

AR: I can't say that there's any one song that I really look forward to doing; hopefully something will spark my emotion and I'll really have a



good time. But it's always different every night. You never know which song is gonna get you excited. Right now we kind of feel obligated to play the hits, and while that's a little hard on us, we feel that to do a good show and give the people what they want, we have to do that. We're really not into doing that. In fact, that's why we're back on the road in America in February.

HP: Tell us about that tour.

AR: We're calling this one the "Skin And Bones" tour, and it gives us a chance to play the other songs—the ones that aren't necessarily the hits. It will be all stripped down to just the six members of the band and a small stage. We'll use the video screens and maybe some cool lights, but it'll be only an hour and forty five minute set, and we're really excited to have the Brian May band as our opening act. I always loved Queen, so that's very exciting for me. And we're gonna be playing arenas in cities that we haven't played yet.

HP: You've been on the road almost non-stop for the last 18 months. How

do you keep going? AR: It really hasn't been straight time on the road. It's been three or four month jaunts, and then you have a month or two off. But during that time you're trying to get your home life together or do whatever videos or recording your doing at that time. But since we've started I've only had one real vacation-that was in Portofino. And there within hours, everyone seemed to know I was there. We ended up having room service all the time. It sounds tough, but it's actually kind of cool. I like to be real private; you don't

always want everyone around you— even when they like you. But at the same time, if they're not there, you wonder what you're doing wrong.

**HP:** Do you ever worry about burn out? It would seem like you really don't have time for a personal life.

AR: I really felt burnt out a lot on the last tour we did. It was very hard for me to be out there because all of the songs were a part of my past, and I wanted to get on to my future. The burn out thing hits and that's when we change the set around a little bit. The South American tour, for instance, has really gotten Slash and me very excited, especially about the people and their responses to the show. It's brought new life into it. To be honest, the American tour was really hard because with Metallica playing a full set, and the crowd being really tired by the time they got to us, and so many spectators who really weren't into the music—people who were there just because they wanted to see what everything was about—it was difficult for us. In Europe, Japan and even South America, everyone who comes to the show is really into the music. With that many people on the American tour just standing around and not giving us energy back, it was really hard for us to keep up our energy level.

HP: Don't you think that the percentage of "spectators" in America was very small?

AR: No. I do go off on the crowd, but there is a big difference between general admission where the people who really care are right in front of you, and the situation where you've got people in the front row who are sitting there with their arms crossed and a "show me something" look on their faces. It's annoying. Especially when you know the people sitting way up in the sky could be having a lot more fun down front. I don't need people to sit there and "test" me. I'm up there, I know what I'm doing. I know how much effort we're putting into it. I don't need someone sitting there saying "impress me." I feel like saying, "no, you impress me."

**HP:** It's been said that you have a love/hate relationship with your audience. Would you agree with that?

AR: I think it depends on the crowd. We did a show with Skid Row in Utah, and there were people sitting there like they were bored off of their asses. Finally, we left. Why should we play the encore? But what we didn't know was that people had been killed at an AC/DC concert there, and the press and local officials had gone off on the kids so much that by the time they got to the show they were just fed up. Security just kept them from getting into the show at all—and we didn't know that. We didn't know what was up. We just wanted to get out of there. My attitude was, "Man, I only have a few bands that really get me off at a show. What do you want? What do you have to do tonight that's better than this?" There were 17 year-old kids there who seemed bored, and I just didn't understand why. Maybe they wanted to go home and listen to something else.

HP: Speaking of listening to something else. What do you listen to when you have the time?

AR: Well, Jane's Addiction was my band, and they broke up. I really don't get the chance to see that many bands live because it's just too hectic. But I'm really into U2, and I was really into their stadium shows. I went to

Guns N' Roses: The classic lineup.

every one of their shows that I could. And I was just listening to the Mr. Bungle album, and even though we have kind of a love/hate relationship with Faith No More, I really like that album. I've also been listening to a lot of bizarre things: Roger Waters, Jimmy Scott, Lyle Lovett, Nine Inch Nails, Alice In Chains— my taste covers a broad range.

HP: How do you view all the bands that have obviously "borrowed" a page from Guns N' Roses in terms of their musical and stylistic approach?

AR: It doesn't bother me at all except when I feel bands aren't pushing themselves creatively.

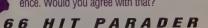
I don't enjoy being imitated; I'd rather inspire than be imitated. If we can inspire some people to take it to the next step, that's great, but a few years ago there were bands that were playing material that was just "wanna be" G N' R things. We never tried to be like AC/DC or the Rolling Stones, but we were certainly massively inspired by them.

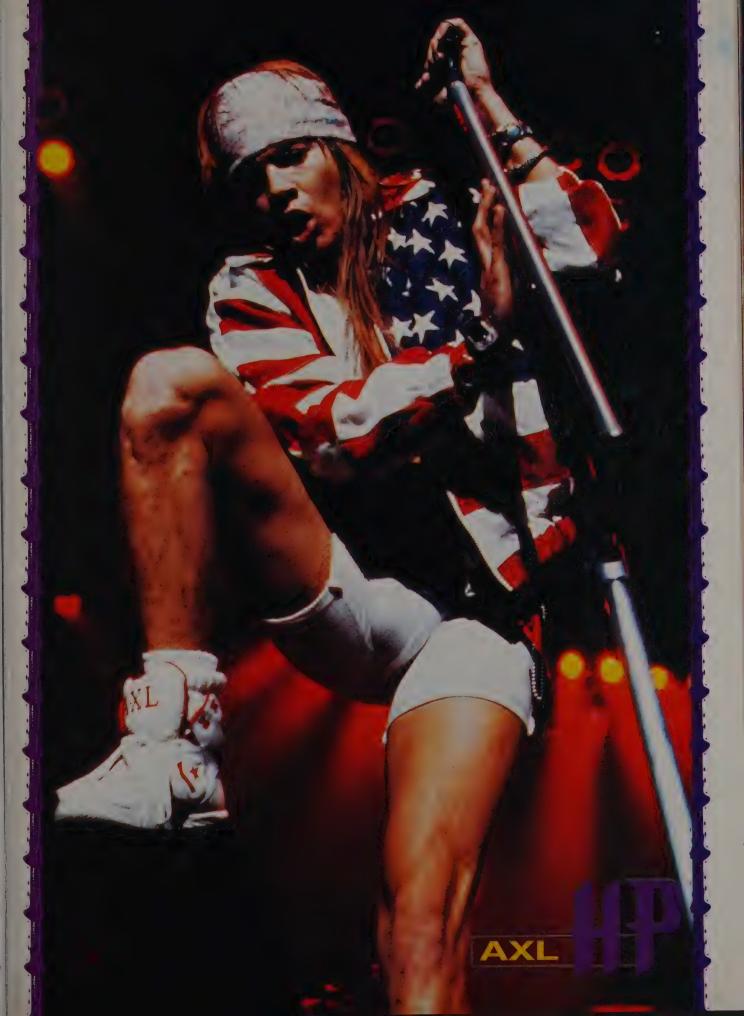
HP: As you look back on the **Use Your Illusion** albums with a little perspective, are you still glad that you released so much material at one time?

AR: Slash and I were just discussing that this morning, and there's no way we regret it. We're very proud of what we've done. We had planned on doing that even before we had done our first album. We didn't know that it would include quite as many songs, but we knew we had to bury Appetite in some way. There was no way to out-do that album, and if we didn't out-do Appetite in one way or another it was going to take away from our success and the amount of power we had gained to do what we wanted. We got all the material we needed to out of our system, and commercially it's been a major success. The only draw back we've had is due to Tipper Gore, and her work to have stickers placed on albums. That really hindered us, I believe.

HP: It's hard to believe that Mrs. Vice President has actually had an impact on Guns N' Roses.

AR: Her efforts really hurt our sales in the States. The whole stickering thing took its effect because major record chains like K-Mart and Walmart, which are 50 percent of a band's sales, won't even carry our albums. You've got to realize that certain income families don't let their kids shop just anywhere. When I was growing up, we were a K-Mart family, so I speak from experience. You could look wherever you wanted, but you bought things at K-Mart because it's a little cheaper. I think the fact that Tipper Gore is closer to power is something that we'll have to deal with. I think the Gores toned down their act in order to get the vote, but I haven't forgotten what she's done. She did achieve her goal—first albums had to be stickered, then stores wouldn't carry stickered albums.





HP: What lies ahead for you and the band?

AR: Slash has been working on a lot of things, working on a lot of riffs with the band. I've just been working on where my head's at on things so I can approach the next record in a way that lets me go to farther extremes. If I'm going to express anger, I want to take that farther, and if I'm expressing happiness and joy I want to take that farther too. We really haven't really sat down to collaborate on songs yet. I wrote and recorded a new love song that I want on the next record called This I Love, that's the heaviest thing that I've ever done. Other than that, we're not even sure how we're gonna approach writing for this next album. Last time Slash would write his songs, I would write mine and Izzy would write his, and then we'd put 'em all together. Well, this time there's no Izzy, and Slash isn't writing just his songs— it's gonna be more of a collaboration thing. We don't know if we're gonna be writing with Gilby or somebody else. We know we want to play with Gilby, but we're not sure about the writing.

**HP:** Do you look at Guns N' Roses as a continually evolving entity, or are you satisfied with the personnel that's now in the band? AR: It's definitely an evolving thing because everyone has different direction that they want to go in, and I wanted to get the band big enough that they'd have those opportunities. We have a lot of new people in the band, but what works at the end is what gets me and Slash off. We're not sure where we want to come from with the other band members as far as the writing goes, and, who knows, if

someone isn't into a song, maybe they don't want to be there. We're really into letting Matt go more off on his own in terms of drumming for G N' R. On **Use Your Illusion**, he was pretty much playing just what we wanted to hear on a particular song—which we already had together before he joined the band. On the record, he's one of the most amazing drummers I've ever heard, but he's better than that.

HP: Did Matt earn such high respect more for the work he's done on stage or on album?

AR: More from just jamming. When he goes off on his own creative sense it's pretty amazing. I want to facilitate that getting out. I want Matt to just explode on the next record.

HP: We know there are some other projects in the works for the band at the moment, including a variety of videos. What can you tell us about those?

AR: First, we have two "making of" videos coming out— and in typical G N' R fashion we'll be putting out Number Two first. It's called Making F\*\*king Videos- Part II November Rain. Then we're putting out another documentary about the making of Don't Cry. We still have yet to write what will be the third part of that story, which will be Estranged, which will show what happened, and why. Then, we've had a documentary crew out with us the whole time we've been out on the road, and they've been filming everything. We're just having our director go through all the footage and we're putting a movie together that will be a combination of reality and fiction tied in with the three videos, November Rain, Don't Cry and Estranged. That story will tie in with the reality of Guns N' Roses, yet there'll be a fictional story going on as well

as between me and my girlfriend Stephanie. We're working on it, but we can't quarantee exactly what it'll be until we get it done.

HP: Do you ever worry that the persona of Axl Rose will get bigger than Guns N' Roses?

AR: The bottom line is that nothing can come between Slash and I, and as long as we have that bond we have Guns N' Roses. However big I get can only help the band because it attracts more attention to Guns N' Roses. I'm not worried about being pulled in other directions. I need Guns N' Roses in my life.

**HP:** There has been talk, however, about Slash doing a solo project. Can you ever see yourself doing an album away from Guns N' Roses?

AR: I want to do some stuff on my own, but not as a means of trying to prove my own sense of identity. You know the song *My World* on **Use**Your Illusion II? I want to do a whole project like that by myself and with whoever else might want to be on it. But right now it's just me and a

computer engineer. It's just raw expression-lust putting ideas together. We just go in, say "what do we want to do" and get to work. We completed My World in three hours. It's something that I need to get out of my system, but it's not something I want to base my career and future on.

HP: You mention the idea of working with other musicians. If you had your choice, who would you really like to work with on a project? AR: Trent Reznor

from Nine Inch Nails is one, and

Dave Navarro from Jane's Addiction is another guy I want to work with. I've talked to Trent about working with me on an industrial synth project, at least on one song, and I definitely want to work with Dave on something. I've always been curious what he would sound like working with Stash on something.

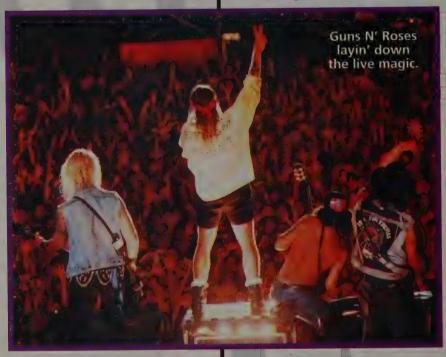
HP: Wasn't Dave rumored to be joining Guns N' Roses after Izzy left?

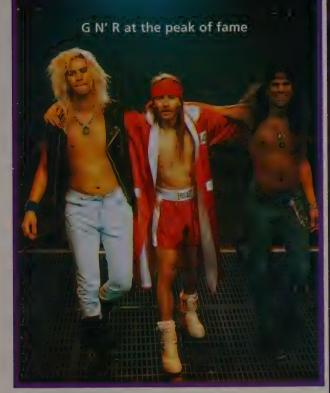
AR: Yeah, there was a lot of talk about that, and we were very open to it.

But it just wasn't the right time in Dave's life for it to happen. He was kind of needing the time to just see where he was at, and he's been very successful at that. But the idea of working with him excites me to no end because I still put on Jane's Addiction and it always seems brand new, no matter how many times I hear it. I'd like to try to achieve a fusion of what they were trying and what G N' R is doing. I think that blend, if taken seriously and patiently, could be amazing. It could be a fuller thing than anyone's done before. Dave and Slash together could be incredible- two guys very "out there" on their own, working together. It's like the first time I met Slash, I said, "The world's gotta see this guy." That's why when he plays with other people or does solo things it totally gets me off and makes me happy. It secures his place in rock history as a guitarist. I feel the same way about Dave. Obviously, I have a much closer bond with Slash, being involved with him for so many years, but I think the world kind of missed Dave. I'd really like to help fix that.

**HP:** You've been called a spokesman for a generation. Is that a heavy burden for you to bear?

AR: I think my material has a place, but I don't place myself that high up on the totem pole. I was reading an interview with Roger Waters recently, and he was saying that he considers himself one of the five best English





writers of all time. He figures there may be John Lennon up there, and maybe Freddie Mercury, but he doesn't know who else. I look at his writing that way too. I don't put myself in that category at all. I'd like to grow to a point where I could. I look at people like Bono, and to me he's just so far ahead of most people spiritually, and in the way his spirituality comes across in his lyrics. That's amazing to me, and it encourages me to strive to reach places where other people have already been. I admire their sense of themselves and where their hearts and minds really are. That's where I want to go with my lyrics, and I hope our audience will come along with us.

HP: It's been said that as someone gets gets older and wiser, it's tougher to relate to a 17-year old audience. Do you find yourself beginning to have

AR: It's back and forth. It depends on the song that we're doing. I can easily be 17 whenever I want. But I'm operating in worlds now where I have to be 45. I can go back and forth. We try to make albums that go from one extreme to another. My girlfriend recently asked me if I could still write a song as nasty and gritty as the things on Appetite, and I told her that it would probably depend on the song and if I was moved to write that way. But I'm not gonna write that way just to sell records. I'm not gonna write any more bar room sex songs just to sell a few more albums. If something inspires me to do it, I will. I won't regress. I'll do it if I can take it to a new place, a new level.

HP: We'll ask you one last thing. When you wake up in the morning, are you happy being Axl Rose?

AR: Am I happy? Hmmmm. Yeah, but I won't really know how happy I am until the end of this tour in May. That's when I'll know if I achieved all of my goals. I've achieved a lot of them, but I'm not in a place where I can sit back on my laurels and say "Hey, I did it." If I can kick back in June and feel a sense of accomplishment, then I'll be happy.

HP: What's the first thing you're gonna do when you have some free time?

AR: I don't remember what free time is. I just bought a skate board, and I was thinking of getting back into that. I can do that then because if I break my arm, I won't have to miss any tour dates because I won't be on tour anymore! I bought a new house, so I guess I'll try to set that up and get some stability in my life. I'll be happy doing some domestic things. Stephanie and I have worked very hard to try and have a personal life, but it's not easy. We've tried to stay in touch as much as possible, but our lives are such fast-moving things. Five months for us, are like five years for most people.

# **SLASH RESPONDS**

in about eight years, so I have no idea where his head is at right how. All I know is that I'm very excited about Velvet Revolver, and that's where my total focus is at the moment. It's gonna have to be something very special for me to change that ocus— even for a short while.

singers and you're certainly no exception going back to your days with Axl. What makes Scott Weiland different?

Slash: What makes him different is that he's cool to work with and a good friend. At the end of the day, that might be the most important thing. Duff, Izzy, Matt and I have remained friends throughout everything we've been through. Axl was just too high



how important is huge success to you new? Stash: If you remember when we talked back during the early



A Place In History

BY ROB ANDREWS

ow amazing it is that nearly 11
years after the death of Kurt Cobain, Nirvana's legacy
continues to grow. With the recent flood of media
attention focused upon the group's 4-CD box set,
With The Lights Out— which featured an array of
previously unreleased songs, studio out-takes and
rough demo tracks rather than the standard collection of MTV hits and
teen anthems— it seems as if the flame surrounding these Grunge
Gods from Seattle is not about to soon expire. It also seems certain
that the aura that has turned the late Mr. Cobain into a timeless rock
icon will continue to escalate in the years and decades to come.
Ironically, during his all-too-brief lifetime, Cobain continually wres-

Ironically, during his all-too-brief lifetime, Cobain continually wrestled with the demons of celebrity, of fame, of living in the harsh glare of the public eye. As his notoriety grew, and as the attention focused on Nirvana continued to expand throughout the early '90s, Cobain began to withdraw more and more into a world of his own design— a "safe cocoon" away from media and fan scrutiny, a private haven that

too often was filled with the potentially lethal combination of alcohol and drugs. Indeed, many would say that it was fameand the myriad problems bestowed on a delicate soul ill prepared to handle the responsibilities inherent in such acclaim-that eventually killed Cobain only three years after his group first rocketed to international fame and fortune. Others might speculate that his premature demise was simply the destiny of a brilliant, though fragile artistic candle whose fate was to be snuffed out too soon, leaving millions around the world in the darkness of despair.

Yes, more than a decade has now passed since Cobain's tragic death. For many of those who've watched with amazement as the legacy and legend of this musical master has continued to grow since his passing, it still remains difficult to place his suicide in a proper perspective. To many, Nirvana's enigmatic frontman was the unquestioned, though unwitting spokesman for his generation, the rocker best suited in manner and attitude for bringing forward the compelling problems—feelings of alienation, anguish and despair—that so characterized and distinguished membership in what was then called Generation X.

To other observers of the rock world, Cobain's passing left less of a permanent mark. To those followers of the contemporary music scene, he was merely a deeply troubled soul, an obviously talented performer whose well-documented personal weaknesses and inability to deal with either success or stardom had long since marked him as a prime candidate for premature martyrdom. Yet, when news of Cobain's suicide hit the rock wires in April, 1994, there was a near-universal agreement that once again the music world had been robbed of one of it's most shining stars— a light that had perhaps burned too brightly and too quickly to survive the inherent pressures of public adulation.

Quite obviously, Cobain was never a performer who actively sought the often-intoxicating lure of rock stardom. In many ways, he was rock's first anti-star, someone who would have been far more comfortable performing in front of 200 patrons in the local bar than in front of 20,000 in a giant arena. When the singer placed a shotgun in his mouth and pulled the trigger on that fateful April afternoon, he was leaving behind a world that had become just too painful for him to deal with. Life in rock's fast lane—the dream of so many other musicians— was a living hell to Cobain. The constant stream of fan acclaim—as well as various pressures placed upon him by record label executives and demanding concert promoters—had the tempestuous singer constantly questioning his own worth, as well as whether his words were being properly presented and accepted by the millions who had christened Cobain their personal "messiah." For anyone such responsibility would be cause for introspection—for Cobain it became a cross too heavy to bear.

"I don't always understand the response our music gets from the

fans," he had said shortly before his death. "I find their reaction really great, and really strange. I wonder if they honestly know what the message is. I think about that a lot."

To many of his closest confidants, all-too-often Cobain appeared to be on the verge of becoming totally trapped in his own personal universe of thought. For the millions of followers who spent countless hours closely listening to his music, and then dissecting his lyrics in their never-ending attempt to analyze Cobain's complex artistic psyche,

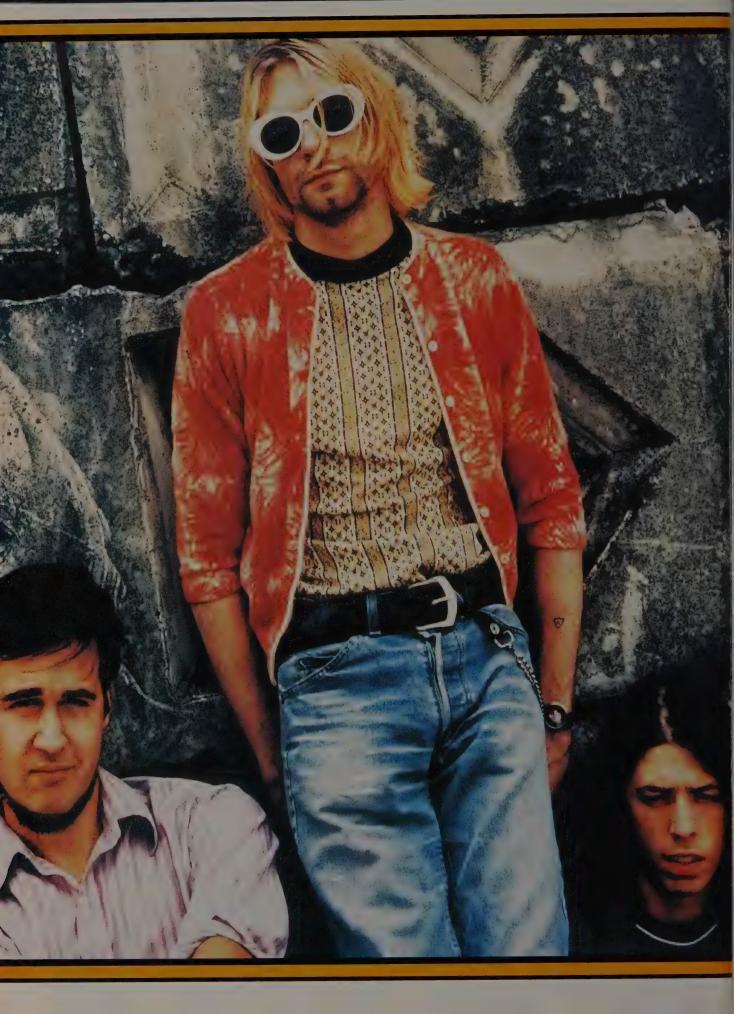
Nirvana's approach was in direct contrast to the throw-away fluff so often associated with early-'90s rock and roll. In many cases the words that formed the foundation of the band's songs seemed to be windows looking in on Cobain's troubled soul, artistic statements that were simultaneous yells of outrage and cries for help. That so many fans were able to personally relate to Cobain's painful ordeal continues to speak well of the singer's unparalleled insight— and continues to bode ominously for the state of America's youth in the 21ST Century.

"Kurt was thrown into his role as a star and a spokesman," a record label source stated. "That was just about the last thing he ever wanted. He had the soul of a poet, not of someone who was blasting music to an arena full of people."

By the time of his death, playing those arenas had become an economic fact of life for Nirvana—yet it was certainly something neither Cobain nor his bandmates ever chose to embrace. But the simple reality of it all was that if the band wanted to tour, the arenas had became a necessity; costs were too high, and demand was too great for the group to do it any other way. It was hell for Nirvana to go out on a nightly basis and play their ear-blasting, yet eminently intimate songs of love, life and personal turmoil in cavernous halls. In fact, those around Cobain reported that the singer had gone back to drinking heavily and doing drugs during that final tour partly due to his depres-







sion, and partly due to his recurring stomach problems.

"People think that we're rich rock stars," Cobain stated in one of his last interviews. "That's just not the case. When we started putting this tour together, we quickly found out that if we did it the way we wanted to do it, playing in medium-size places where we could see everyone and they could see us, we'd take a financial bath. Playing the big places just became a necessity.

No matter how much Cobain may have detested the impersonal ambiance provided by arenas designed more for watching basketball than listening to music, it seems highly unlikely that performing in such facilities was the straw that broke the proverbial camel's back. More likely, what pushed the singer over the brink to suicide was the difficulty he and wife Courtney Love were having in maintaining rights to their then-two-vear-old daughter, Frances Bean, According to those in-theknow, officials from the Seattle child welfare agency had been investigating the couple's rumored drug use, and talks were underway that may have eventually led to the child being taken away. This situation apparently was what rested at the heart of Cobain's despondency on that tragic day back in April, '94. Supposedly he had also experienced a bitter falling out with bandmates David Grohl and Krist Novoselic in the weeks prior to his death, with Cobain stating that Nirvana had gone as far as it could or should. But unquestionably it was his domestic problems that rested most heavily on Cobain's troubled soul.



"That baby meant so much to him," a friend related. "I know a lot of people around him hoped that having the baby would give him more strength than he had in the past. He was always such an emotional guy, a very delicate person in many ways. It didn't take much to push him over the edge. When he got married we all saw it as a good step for him. We all thought the baby would give him the reason for going on. I quess we were all wrong.'

For many, the decade-plus that has now passed since Cobain's untimely end have blazed by like the blinking of an eye for others the time has seemed like a lifetime. But despite the passing of years, perhaps the most haunting question surrounding Cobain's tragic demise still remains unanswered; what is it about the rock and roll lifestyle that seems to draw so many "delicate" souls to its intoxicating flame? How ironic that Cobain died at the age of 27, the same age that saw earlier rock icons Jimi Hendrix and Jim Morrison both meet their own tragic demise. What is it that makes so many succomb to the pressuresand pleasures— inherent in the rock approach?

Has rock become the last great poet's escape; the forum through which the great creative minds of our generation must speak? Certainly Kurt Cobain was a unique and special talent, a singer/quitarist/songwriter who saw both the sadness and the wry humor in the world around him. Ask anyone who ever had the pleasure of spending time with Cobain and their words will most likely be the same; here was a guy who gave a damn. He cared about the right social issues, about the people who listened to his music, about his family and his friends... he

just didn't care enough about himself. In the three amazingly short years that Nirvana reigned at the top of the rock world, they made a musical statement for the ages. Perhaps no other hard rock band captured the attitudes of their era better than Nirvana. From the moment *Smells Like Teen Spirit* blasted the band into public consciousness around the world, Cobain knew there was no turning back. There would be no returning to the underground status the band had enjoyed during their early recording career. Whether they liked it or not, they were bound to be something big-something important

Kurt Cobain and Nirvana made special music at a very special time in

American history. They were the eyes, ears and—most importantlythe voices of a young generation that was being too often taken for granted. If Cobain served as some sort of sacrificial lamb in order to create more interest in that generation, so be it. At least then his passing would not have been in vain. Perhaps the greatest legacy that Cobain can leave behind is the sad lesson that seemingly every generation must learn for themselves. It is the lesson that one man's dream may be another man's prison. That the pain of flying too high must never be combated by drugs or drink. Let the strength of Nirvana's music be his legacy, not the unfortunate weaknesses of the man that created it.

# NCREDIBLE NIRVANA QUIZ!

Tou own all their albums—both major label and indie, you've watched every video at least a thousand times and you sat front-row at one of their last concerts. Yup, you think you know everything about Nirvana. Well, here's your chance to put up or shut up. Take a crack at our Ultimate Nirvana Quiz, 25 questions designed to separate the pretenders from the Real Thing. Sure, some questions are almost too easy. But if you can answer at least 20 of our brain teasers about Kurt, Krist and Dave, then you unquestionably deserve the title of Nirvana Master.

- What was the title of the demo tape record by Kurt Cobain and the Melvins Dale Crover in 1985?
- Name the school where Cobain first encountered Krist Novoselic.
- Which rock personality was Kurt Cobain married to?
- What was Nirvana's original lineup?
- Who produced Nirvana's original 10 song demo tape?
- Name the four drummers that appeared in Nirvana.
  What was the "A" and "B" side of Nirvana's first Sub Pop single?
  Who was Nirvana's original second guitarist?
- Who was their final second guitarist?
- 10. What was the total amount of money spent on the recording of Bleach?
- 11. What was the name of the 1992 disc that featured Nirvana Bsides and rarities?
- 12. Which two guest musicians joined Nirvana on stage during the taping of MTV Unplugged?
- 13. Where did Nirvana perform their final U.S. concert?

  14. Nirvana's April, 1993 concert in San Francisco was performed to raise awareness for what important political issue?
- 15. On what label was the Blew EP released?
- What band was Dave Grohl in directly prior to joining Nirvana?
- Who produced Nevermind?
- 18. What breakthrough song (and Nirvana's first major label single)
- has been hailed as "the anthem of a generation"?
- 19. What major label signed Nirvana after their stint at Sub Pop?
- 20. On what date did Nevermind first reach the top of the sales charts?
- What Mudhoney member was briefly the drummer for Nirvana?
- What brand of guitars did Kurt Cobain favor?
- Name Kurt Cobain's daughter.
- 24. On what date did MTV first run Nirvana's Unplugged perform-
- 25. On what date did Kurt Cobain commit suicide?

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PARADER



# AFROSMITH

Same Old Song And Dance

BY SKIP PETERSON

teven Tyler has a hard time accepting the fact that Aerosmith has now spent more than 30 years entertaining the world's rock and roll masses. To the eternally-young vocalist, at times it seems as if the band he formed so long ago with Joe Perry, Tom Hamilton, Brad Whitford and Joey Kramer are still the new-kids-on-the-block, a band still struggling to truly establish their reputation as America's premier blues-rock contingent. But to two generations of fans that have grown up under Aerosmith's pervasive influence, these seminal Boston Bad Boys remain a true rock and roll institution—though Tyler would certainly joke that he is too young to be "institutionalized." Now, as the band looks ahead to 2005, Tyler admits that he and his bandmates have never felt hetter, or more committed to the rock and roll cause.

"I do still feel young, and I still feel we have something to prove," the large-

lipped frontman stated. "I look around and still see musicians like Eric Clapton and Jimmy Page as well bands like the Stones and Who— all of whom were my influences when I was growing up— being active and productive. In comparison to them, we're just a bunch of pups. Yeah, it's great when a lot of young bands come along and tell us how much we've meant to them and how much they admire us. But we're not necessarily here to be admired and adored— we're here to play some great rock and roll."

To many American rock and roll fans Aerosmith have always represented something special, a band that in many ways was bigger than life, a group that exemplified the freewheeling, fun-loving, anything-goes atti-

tude that has always been at the heart of rock and roll's on-going appeal. Quite simply. Aerosmith has always been the band we could truly call our own. Emerging in the early '70s, at a time when American rock and roll bands still played second fiddle to their British brethren, the band's raucous, roadhouse sound was immediately compared to that of everyone from the Rolling Stones, to Led Zeppelin to the Yardbirds (the latter of whom, as legend has it, Tyler briefly worked for as a "roadie" during his youth). But there was something about Aerosmith that made them instantly stand out from the crowd of neo-Brit poseurs. Sure Tyler had Mick's lips and Perry had conveniently borrowed Keith's quitar swagger, but Aerosmith never needed to rely on anyone or anything in order to garner a lion's share of attention. After all, they were playing American music—the blues—in a distinctly American way. What the Stones and Zeppelin may have had to pick up second-hand, Aerosmith seemed to have had injected directly into their veins. From the moment their self-titled debut disc was released in 1973 (featuring the smash hit Dream On) there was no mistaking it- Aerosmith were going to give American rock and roll the credibility it had long craved.

"We started out as a band that loved playing the blues and loved playing rock and roll, and when you think about it, that's still pretty much what we are today," Perry said. "We never expected this to last for the long-run. I don't think any of us ever gave it much thought. We were just all interested in making it to the next day. I remember in the early days how we all lived in this tiny apartment in Boston. It was cold, there was never any food, but every Saturday night we'd have a big party. It was a blast."

The "party" for Aerosmith soon became a virtually non-stop event. The success of their debut disc was followed in short order by 1974's **Get Your Wings**.

1975's **Toys In The Attic** and 1976's **Rocks**. Each disc sold progressively more than its predecessor, with **Toys** becoming the group's first platinum seller, and **Rocks** their first venture into double-platinum. With radio picking up on each of the band's single releases—with such tunes as *Sweet Emotion* and *Walk This Way* becoming both AM and FM staples—and the group's concert performances drawing rave reviews from coast to coast, Aerosmith soon found themselves in the enviable position of not only being one of America's biggest rock and roll bands, but one of the biggest rock attractions on Earth! It was all heady stuff for these five young rockers, and some of the fame—and accompanying fortune—began to go directly to the band's collective head

"Hey, we were all a bunch of young, single guys on the road," Tyler said.
"What do you think was going on. Women were everywhere, drugs were every-

where, alcohol was everywhere— we tried everything, and we tried a lot of it. There's no question that it started having a real bad effect on us. There started to be some real problems within the band. Looking back on it, it was really sad. Here we were at what should have been the happiest times of our lives, and we were blowing it— both figuratively and literally."

The stories of both Aerosmith's excesses,

The stories of both Aerosmith's excesses, and their inner turmoil filled the rock wires. Even on stage, where Tyler's hip-shaking gyrations and scarf-dripping microphone stand had fast become trademarks, there was a big drop-off in both band energy and cohesion. Despite the group's obvious internal problems they struggled ahead, releasing the highly successful **Draw The Line** in 1977 and

Live Bootleg in 1978. But by the time the group gathered together to begin work on Night in The Ruts in 1979, the writing was apparently already on the wall. Perry, who had long been like a brother to Tyler, openly began resenting both the frontman's dominance over the group, and his increasingly unpredictable demeanor. Soon after the disc's release, Perry quit the band to begin his own Joe Perry Project, with whom he'd record three moderately successful albums. And as if Perry's defection wasn't enough of a distraction, there were soon to be more problems in store for Aerosmith— in 1981 Whitford also left the group to team up with former Ted Nugent guitarist Derek St. Holmes who together recorded one album under the clever moniker of Whitford/St. Holmes. As Tyler recalls, it looked like Aerosmith was truly between a rock and a hard place.

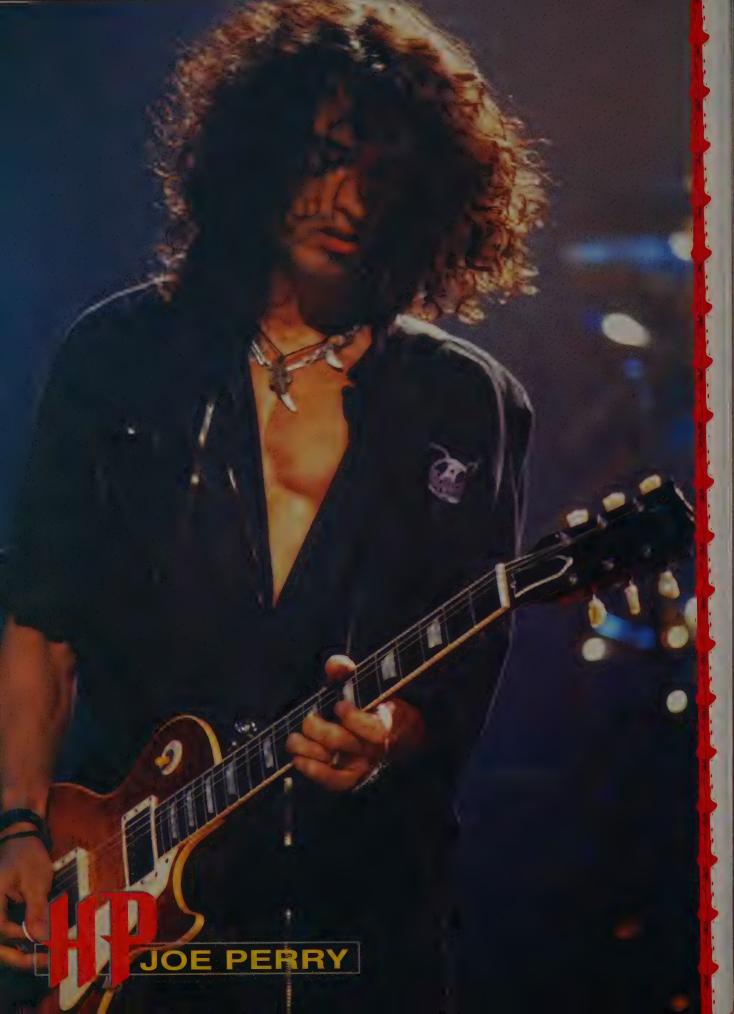
"You know, what's really unfortunate is that I was so out of it most of the time that when Joe left the true significance of what had happened was kind of lost on me," he said. "I was more concerned about taking care of my own needs than anything else. I don't think I had a clue as to how much trouble I was in and how much trouble the band was in. Thankfully, we both made it through."

It would still be a long, hard road for Tyler, Kramer and Hamilton before Aerosmith would again enjoy smooth sailing. The band recruited guitarists Jimmy Crespo and Rick Dufay to replace Perry and Whitford, and began work on their next disc, Rock In A Hard Place— an album that also happened to represent the end of their original contract with Columbia Records. The record wasn't bad, but it barely managed to go gold, despite the best efforts of the label to promote it to-the-max. Their 1983 world tour was met with lukewarm response from both fans and the media, and Tyler's growing health problems were evident to all in attendance. Many began to predict that Aerosmith wouldn't make it through the year...and to secretly whisper that a similar fate might befall Tyler.



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But just as things began to plummet towards total oblivion, a ray of light shone through. On Valentine's Day, 1984, Perry and Whitford showed up unexpectedly at an Aerosmith concert in Boston. Within weeks it was announced that the hand's original lineup would be reuniting for a "Back In The Saddle Tour"and more importantly, both Tyler and Perry had agreed to try and kick their dependencies before returning to the road.

'We had to do it," Tyler said. "If we didn't we really didn't know what was going to happen. I just realized I was sick and tired of waking up on the bathroom floor of some hotel and not knowing where I was. It was killing me. But I'm strong, I knew once I put my mind to it. I could get myself together, and I did "

It proved to be a long, difficult trip through rehab, a journey filled with a never-ending series of temptations, distractions and diversions, but the selfproclaimed "Toxic Twins" finally made it through in flying colors. As if to honor their efforts, almost the day they proclaimed themselves to be free of offending chemicals, the reunited Aerosmith was offered a big-buck deal with high-flying Geffen Records. By early 1985 the hale-and-hearty unit was back in the studio working on Done With Mirrors, the disc that unbeknownst to Tyler, Perry and the boys, was to serve as the primary tool in reestablishing both Aerosmith's tarnished reputation and their stellar credentials. The eve-opening success of Done With Mirrors (which was followed by a sold-out world tour) was quickly followed by a string of platinum successes for the band— 1987's Permanent Vacation (featuring the hit Dude Looks Like A Ladv), and 1989's Pump. Each album was followed-up with an ever-larger touring itinerary, during which the "dry to the bone" Toxic Twins celebrated each victory with a variety of fruit juices, diet sodas and bottles of "fake beer"

Somewhere along the way (even Tyler is not sure exactly when it happened), Aerosmith found themselves transformed from an oft-troubled, struggling "wanna-be" band into the patron saints of the entire American rock and roll scene. Young groups like Guns N' Roses and Motley Crue openly expressed their admiration for the Aero boys and leading forces both in the print media and MTV began treating the unit as if they indeed were one of the most powerful, influential and successful bands around. It all proved to be heady stuff for Tyler and company, but they ate it all up as if it were manna delivered direct from rock and roll heaven.

"It was great to start getting that kind of respect," he said. "For a while I thought it was just because we were survivors—that we had been through the wars and made it through alive. But then I began to realize that it was a lot more than that, that people were really digging our music, and realizing what we had done. It really opened my eyes.

Amid a flurry of "greatest hits" packages, long-form home videos and prestigious MTV awards for their ground breaking videos, by 1993 there was no question that Aerosmith was the toast of the rock world. The music scene had changed, with "grunge" and alternative wiping away most of the familiar faces of the '80s. But through it all. Aerosmith survived and prospered. That year they released Get A Grip, the multi-platinum disc that would serve as their swan song to Geffen. Earlier that year the band had signed an extraordinary deal with Sony Music, that would not kick in for another three years! In the mean time the band toured the world yet again, in the process garnering more Viewer's Choice awards for such videos as Cryin', Livin' On The Edge and Amazing.

But while the band practically lived on the tour trail, the rock world waited...and waited...and waited to see what Aerosmith was going to come up with next. Rumors flew indicating that they were having trouble with management, that certain band members had fallen "off the wagon" (which thankfully proved false) and that they were battling with their record label over the direction their first Sony release was to take (which also proved to be somewhat overstated). Finally Nine Lives was released in 1997 amid a fanfare usually reserved for papal coronations or presidential inaugurations. And, true to form, it was a disc that lived up to everyone's lofty expectations—including Tyler's. In some ways, the success of that disc signaled the beginning of yet another era for Aerosmith, With the subsequent success of the 2001 release Just Push Play, the emergence of their best selling "hits" collection, 0, Yeah! In 2002, and the world-wide acclaim fostered upon their recent "blues" collection, Honkin' On Bobo, it seems as if Aerosmith's rock and roll "jones" will just never go away! While it may be hard for the singer to believe that more than 30 years have now passed since the release of the group's first album, he remains more convinced than ever that much of Aerosmith's story still lies

This ain't no 'retro' project," he said. "The music we're making now is as cutting-edge as anything we've ever done. I see bands that have been around a while who depend on playing songs from ten or fifteen years ago. That's not for us. I never want to see a time when we're not pushing ourselves as hard as we can to keep livin' on the edge... at least in a musical sense.'

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

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HIT PARADER 77



# Once More With Feeling

BY BILL WILLIAMS

o Motley Crue are back together. Following years of bickering, back-biting and not-so-pleasant bantering, this legendary unit comprised of vocalist Vince Neil, bassist Nikki Sixx, drummer Tommy Lee and guitarist Mick Mars has returned to doing what they do best—lighting up arenas across the nation on what they promise will be one of the year's most eye-popping tours. Supporting their recently released "greatest hits" package, **Red**, **White & Crue**, these hallowed West

Coast Wildmen seem focused on taking their 21 vear career to a spectacular new plateau. But as the Baddest Band in the Land adds another chapter to their historic legacy in typically larger-than-life fashion, we found ourselves thinking that this may well be the perfect time to reflect back to the very beginning of this unit's career in order to understand why there will be only one Motley Crue... and why for many of us, one will always be more than enough!

The year was 1983, and Motley Crue had just signed a major label deal. It was one of those "perfect" midsummer's nights along Los Angeles' legendary Sunset Strip. It was hot, it was steamy, and the air was filled

with excitement. Despite the oppressive conditions, however, a crowd of over one thousand kids had lined up along the famed Strip, hoping against hope to be one of the chosen few allowed to venture into the Roxy Theater to see Motley Crue perform live that

evening. The gathered throng was a fascinating group—guys with hair-down-to-there, dressed head-to-toe in black leather (perfect for the 90 degree heat), and girls seemingly drawn straight from the pages of **Playboy**, clad in happy hooker outfits that would have made their mothers cringe in outright horror. Mousseabused hair was everywhere, as was the blaring sound of hard rock. The crowd's heroes, Motley Crue, were about to play one of their last local club shows before venturing out to conquer the world.

Backstage, inside their crowded, filthy, clothes-littered changing room, Nikki, Vince, Tommy and Mick seemed to revel in the debauchery and chaos that existed on the other side of their dressing room door. Every few minutes the platinum-blond Neil would stick his head out of the back door, hear the screams of recognition and scurry back to his bandmates with an ear-to-ear grin across his face. "You can't believe how many people are out there," Neil blurted. Sixx would only offer a world weary shrug in

response to his singer's bubbling enthusiasm; after all, Nikki expected Motley Crue to generate mayhem wherever they went. He had created them for just such a purpose. They were supposed to be the wildest band ever to step on a concert stage—a carefully constructed course in social rebellion and musical mayhem designed to both outrage conservative action groups and sell lots of records.

"When we were playing clubs, we put on a show that was designed to both entertain the kids that had come, and to con-

vince a record label to give us a chance," Sixx said. "We knew that what we were doing was really out there—really far away from what the major labels were willing to put up with at that time. But we also knew that if we stuck to our guns we'd make it, and make it exactly the way we wanted to. The fact is that we never had to compromise anything. We had a lot to prove to a lot of people, and doing that was one of the most satisfactory things in my life."

Prove themselves, indeed!
Almost as soon as their debut album, **Too Fast For Love**, had been released on tiny Leathur Records (it would quickly be rereleased by Elektra after the band signed their major label deal), Motley

Crue established themselves as a band that would either instantly crash in flames, or revolutionize the American hard rock scene. Though many predicted dire consequences for the band, stating that they displayed minimal musical talent and that the impact of

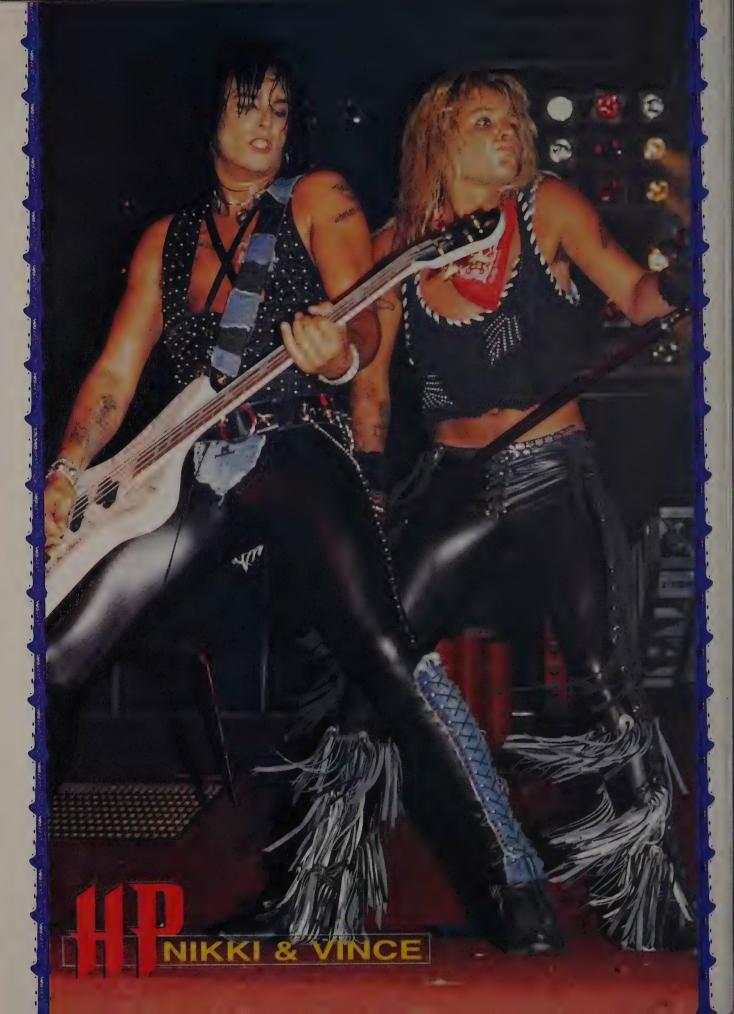
their on-stage theatrics would quickly wear thin, it soon became evident that the Crue was destined to almost single-handedly turn their home town of L.A. into the center of the rock world throughout the '80s. Underneath their mounds of hair, frightful stage makeup and artfully ragged clothes, lurked the heart of true rock and roll mercenaries—guys that would do just about anything in order to make it to the top.

"I don't know if we have ever really been understood by the people who have tried to write about us," Sixx said. "Even the people at the record label have sometimes been confused by what we're trying to do. But the people who did understand us were the kids who bought the records and came to the shows. They understood our songs, and they knew we were talking to them and for them. I wrote songs for the people who grew up in the TV generation— those who only have an attention span of the five minutes between commercials. They need a lot of stuff going on during the songs and on stage. That's our audience."



"We had a lot to prove to a lot of people, and doing that was one of the most satisfactory things in my life."





Sixx certainly understood his following. Over a seven-year period from 1983 through 1989. Motley Crue was the most successful and controversial band in the rock and roll kingdom, Such albums as Shout At The Devil. Theater Of Pain and Dr. Feelgood sold a combined total of over 20 million albums world-wide, But that was only a part of the Crue's mystique. Their off-stage reputa-tion for fighting

and loving their way across the continents struck a responsive nerve within millions—some longing to live the Crue Lifestyle, others wanting to permanently bury the band in the black hole of oblivion. But no matter how hard those critics tried, the Crue just kept getting bigger and bigger. Their tales of mass groupie gropes and of debauchery of every style and fashion soon started attracting as much mainstream media attention as their music, and for many Motley Crue became synonymous with the wild and wicked

lifestyle of the '80s.

Despite all their acclaim, however, Sixx remained something of a rock and roll purist. The more people focused attention on the group's lascivious lifestyle, the more he wanted to prove his band's artistic merit. By the time the '90s dawned, Sixx sensed that a new and radically different musical sensibility has emerged, and he moved to take the band in a radical new direction. Viewing frontman Neil as a "limiting factor" who could only handle the band's simple, party-hearty tunes, he fired the singer, adding new voice John Corabi in time to record the band's self-titled 1993 release. Rather than accepting the move, the Crue's still loyal following rebelled, feeling that this musical "brotherhood", one of the few groups in rock history where every band member was as equally famous as the other, was forever damaged. They may have been right. The **Motley Crue** disc failed miserably on a commercial level, and the band's tour was forced to cancel shows in major markets when even small venues couldn't sell enough tickets to avoid an embarrassing scene.

By 1996 Neil (whose own solo career was quickly going down the toilet after two poorly selling discs), was back in the fold, just in time to record **Generation Swine**- a disc that pleasantly surprised some of the group's long-time supporters while adding few



new "recruits" to the band's musical army. Soon after. the Crue's offstage activities once again began to usurp their onstage magic. This time the center of attention was Lee. who ended up doing a six-month stretch in prison following a fight with his on-again. off-again wife. bodacious actress Pamela Anderson. In fact, after touring with the band on their '97/'98 road outing. Tommy decided to leave the Crue

prior to the start of their summer of '99 tour in order launch a solo career and to spend more time with his family, which by then

included two young sons.

Since then, it's been something of a hit-and-miss existence for the Crue. Their sporadic discs and tours have been met with lukewarm responses... at best. But some how, some way, everyone who ever played air guitar to one of the band's riff-heavy anthems always sensed that these ultimate tattoo-wearing, rule-breaking, wall-shaking rock and roll rebels had at least one more blow-the-roof-off tour housed within their collective rock and roll souls. And while their reunion in 2004 didn't come together easily, when it was announced that the band's original lineup would perform together again on the **Red**, **White and Crue** tour, fans everywhere rejoiced. And the notion that the band was going to venture back into arenas and deliver the kind of no-holds-barred stage spectacular that their fans crave, was news welcomed by millions from Los Angeles to London.

"A band like Motley Crue was designed to hit hard and burn out fast." Sixx said. "I never expected us to last five years—let alone

ten or 20.

Despite the current acclaim the band may be enjoying as they reintroduce themselves to an appreciative music world, one should never forget the role that Motley Crue played is shaping the style, look and attitude of America during the wild-'n-crazy '80s. While the band members may be better known today for being TV stars and marrying magazine centerfolds, that shouldn't detract from the documented fact that for one brief, shining moment in time Motley Crue were rock and roll.

"I'll always be proud of what we've accomplished," Sixx said. "Nobody else did it like we did, and nobody else ever will."

# **NIKKI GETS OUTRAGEOUS!**

"There's a part of me that's just reservoor for this band. My wife knows it. When she sees me come through the door. She knows right away if the Motley Crue Nikhi Sixx is there. If he is, she tells me to leave him at the door. Well, when we go out lour this time, that guy's definitely coming with me for the whole for "

There were some initial problems will netting everyone together (for the neumon). We all had different lawyers and we were all involved in different accounts at the time. I wasn't even sins.

everyone to focus on what needed to be done wasn't that easy. But we were determined to make this frappen so we worked frough it, and t in glad we did. What modwated this happening at this time was the constant demand frou fairs around the world. It was amazing it was something that pust started proying and basn't stopped.

When you start a hand like Molley Crue, you think it might (ast for a few your before it burns itself out. "I'ven when it gets to be rive it years ast, you think it may be time to seed it. We't, now it's more than 20 some and raylor the time has come, and it it is, we're account no out the saint way.

"We're like brothers, and we always have been. There are times we don't want to talk to one another or even be in the same room. But we always know that if one of us is in need, then we're all there for him. It's always been that way. The toruly thing about getting everyone together for this tour was that we weren't getting together because of a problem it was a good thing, and that's sometimes toes an issue for us.

The fraction any lessons about what you can do and not do. But this is still Morley Grue. Everyone knows that this was never some soft of act with as. This band represented who and what on are. That will never cliange.



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MARILYN:MANSON



The second contract of

25129 PANTERA Vulgar Display

45522 SLAYER War Skelelon He



44665 PINK FLOYD Animals

43090 SLAYER Show No Mercy

TAKING BACK SUNDAY



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47366 P. THE WEL Gas Mask Logo

45515 SLAYER South Of Heaver



42004 LACUNA COIL Group Photo

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44455 QUEEN Crest Logo

25398 SLIPKNOT Ghosted Outline Log









44449 SLIPKNOT



1984 S. PUMPKINS

































# Warm And Comfortable. LG & XL. [check website or call for NO & 2X availability] 1000/o Cotton Available in LG & XL Scheck mebsite or call for MD & 2X availability Printed On A Polyester Cloth. 30% x 40" Hand Anywherel Comfortable Stocking Caps With Cool Embroidered Artwork High Quality Caps With Embroidered Artwork BLS Amesome Accessory With Premium Quality Stiching Available in SM, MD, LG, & XL Name: Apt # Address: UNIZIG BLS E-Mail Address: Size Tri-Fold Design With A 15" Chain With Embroldered Artwork

# TOYS IN THE

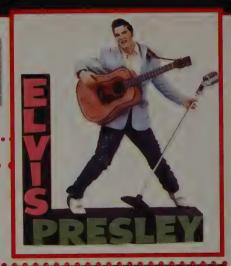
E COOLEST GAMES & GEAR

## **ROCKABILLY ELVIS**

Thanks to McFarlane Tovs, the King of Rock 'n Roll, Elvis Preslev is back, and, better than

The Early Sixties Rockabilly Elvis figure features the legendary icon in his famous classic pose; along with his guitar and microphone complete this highly collectible figure.

For more information about this McFarlane Elvis collectible, please visit them on the web at: www.McFarlane.com.



## MLB 2006

Take me out to the ballgame— buy me the new MLB 2006 by 989 Sports. This video game has an all-new game play, which allows the video game connoisseur an exciting adventure on this field of dreams!

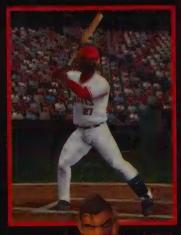
MLB 2006 offers an all-new Branch Point Technology (BPT), which delivers a seamless play in fielding transitions as well as smooth base running; an all-new Fielding Zone, which brings together players attributes with the gamers' skill level in order to achieve their

ultimate game play on one of the 60 teams, or in the five stadiums. The All-New Progressive Audio allows the gamer to feel the intense emotions as well as the tremendous intensity of each play made— makes you feel that you're actually in the

For more information about MLB 2006, please visit www.MLB.com







## RISE OF THE KASAI

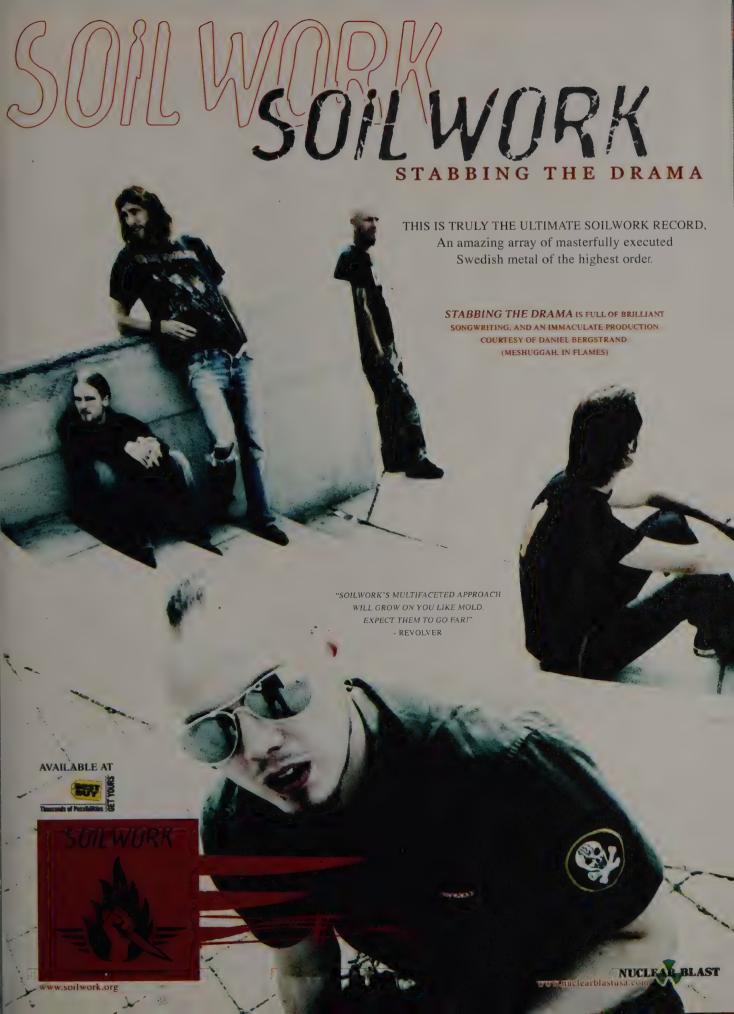
The Rise of the Kasai by PlayStation 2 is the sequel to the critically acclaimed The Mark of Kri. This video game builds upon the original with new storylines, characters, and weapons. With 10 captivating levels and numerous collaborative fighting stages, gamers will start their journey by playing through events that took place 10 years prior to **The Mark of Kri** and the jump to 10 years later when a series of new spells have taken hold.

Players can either assume the role of Rau, a heroic warrior unmatched in skill and strength, Tati, his younger, agile sister with a darker, more threatening side, or other characters, each with their own weapons, deadly combos, and unique animations. As the last of the Rakus, together they must scout, strategize, stealth and fight through richly detailed 3D environments, where they will discover the truth about the family's dark secret, and, the ori-

Rise of the Kasai presents a new and innovative approach to fighting adventure games. With the critically acclaimed

combat system, gamers can attack in stealth mode or use the best weapon available for the situation. Up to nine opponents in the player's range can be attacked by using the right analog stick to select and assign specific or multiple buttons for lethal combos. Combined with artistically sketched movies, and, a colorful cast of characters, the engaging storyline of Rise of the Kasai will immerse gamers into a world of dark magic, discovery, and conflict.





## CONFESSIONS...

The second edition of Confessions of a **Record Producer: How to Survive the Scams** and Shams of the Music Business (Backbeat Books) written by Moses Avalon gives the reader an inside look into the recording

Confession of a Record Producer is not about how the music recording business should work, but how it does work. This book was written to enlighten not frighten the reader!

Confession also explores the important recent developments; including Internet "file sharing" as well as how much artists really make, and copyright myth, this book answers all your questions— and much, much more!

For more information about Confessions of a Record Producer, please visit them www.backbeatbooks.com.

## **HOW TO WRITE:**

How to Wich Mark Evan Schwartz

TO COURTESY OF CONTINUUM BOOKS

How To Write: A Screenplay written by Mark Evan Schwartz Continuum Books) introduces the reader into the world of screenwriting-literal-

The book is actually formatted in the form of a screenplay. Yes, there is a hero. Danny, a starlet, Bebe.

and a mentor, Virgil, who helps Danny, write his brilliant screenplay to win Bebe's heart!

To learn the fate of these intriguing characters in How To Write A Screenplay as well as learn about screenwriting process and procedures, please click onto: www.cintinuum-books.com.

# **DVD REVIEWS**

## SAW

SAW by Lions Game Home Entertainment is a psychological thriller with an all-star cast; Cary Elwes (Kiss the Girls), Danny Glover (Lethal Weapon 1-4), Monica Potter (Along Came a Spider). and, Leigh Whannell (The Matrix Reloaded)

This thrilling movie follows an obsessed killer, who enjoys teaching his victims the value of life a deranged, sadistic serial killer is abducting morally wayward people and forcing them to play horrific games for their own survival. Faced with impossible choices, the victims must struggle to win back his or her life, or else die trying!



## THE FINAL CUT

The Final Cut by Lion Gate Home Entertainment is a compelling fable that offers a vision of a world where memory implants record all moments of a person's life. Post mortem, these memories are

removed and edited by a "cutter" into a reel depicting the life of the departed for a commemorative ceremony called

a Rememory. Robin Williams' powerful portrayal of Alan Hackman, a troubled "cutter," propels this character driven story that forces us to question the power of our memories- and, the sanctity of our privacy!



# STAGE BEAUTY

**Lions Gate Home Entertainment** brings to home video, Stage Beauty starring Billy Crudup (Almost Famous) and Claire Danes (Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines).

Since women were forbidden to act in 17<sup>th</sup> century England, Ned Kynaston (Crudup) became the most popular "leading lady" of his time. He per-formed nightly as Desdemona in Shakespeare's Othello and continued to draw in a captivated audience.

This was, of course, until the rules changed. The King renounced the rule that only men could play women on stage. This is where Maria (Danes), Kynaston's loyal dresser, takes the stage and becomes an instant starleaving Kynaston to suppress his femininity and finally make a man of him!

This fascinating DVD features: Director Commentary, Deleted Scenes, Trailers, and Behind-the-Scenes footage, plus: much, much more!



HIT PARADER





they go, whatever they do, however they may prefer to be perceived, the simple fact to the matter is that people talk about this legendary nine-man metal outlit from Des Moines, towa. You might think that after six years in the spullight, d.j. Sid Wilson, bassist Paul Gray, gullarist James Root, drummer Joey Jordson, keyboardist Craig Jones, percursionist Chris Felin, percussionist Shawn "Clown" Crafian, guitarist Mick Thomson and vocalist Corey Taylor may have grown used to living under the constant barrage of medic generated type, innuendo and rumor. But, while they do their best to hide from the near constant threat presented by the talse stones and outrageous claims that have become part of Knot lore, as they continue to tour the nation on their historic, arena-filling Subliminal Verses Tour, these mask-wearing rockers still haven't ooten much better at truly dealing.

"We're so close that we try to bond together and ignore all the crap that we sometimes hear and read," Taylor said. "But sometimes it does get out of hand. With nine of us, a little story can circulate, and by the time it reaches the last guy, it's gotten blown up into something big. We just deal with 'em as best we can, but it's not always easy.

When it comes to Slipknot rumors, where do we start? Hmmmm... lets' see... well, there was the one that ran through Europe last summer that Taylor had met an untimely end in a freak accident. And there was the one that the band almost blew their spot in last season's Saturday



Night Live broadcast by having a major knock-down brawl backstage right before going on. And then, of course, there was the one that flew around the world just prior to the release of the band's most recent disc. Vol. 3: The Subliminal Verses, that the band was on the verge of breaking asunder— even before they could begin a tour to support their new album! And while there was a least some truth to this last bit of info, with the group's latest disc proving to be their most successful ever, and their U.S. tour (which also features the likes of Lamb of God and Shadows fall) packing venues on a nightly basis, it appears—as is so often be the case with Slipknot-related issues—that talk of the band's "demise" has been greatly exaggerated.

"I guess we're as responsible for some of that as anyone," Taylor said. "I was the one who first mentioned the subject of the band possibly breaking up over a year ago. But I never expected it to become such a big topic I tend to be very honest when people ask me things, but there are times when I'm convinced it's better just to tell 'em what they want to

hear. It causes less of a problem.

But when you get right down to it, is it really that surprising that so many fans around the globe remain fascinated by the latest exploits (whether real or imagined) perpetrated by metal's masked musical miscreants? After all, with their three albums (1999's Slipknot, 2001's lowa and 2004's Vol.3: The Subliminal Verses) selling a combined total of over five million copies world-wide, their eve-popping stage spectaculars packing halls from Boston to Bangkok, and videos such as their recent double-headed monster, Vermilion and Vermilion, Pt. 2. amazing all who witness them, Slipknot are without doubt the biggest, baddest, boldest blokes on the rock and roll hlock)

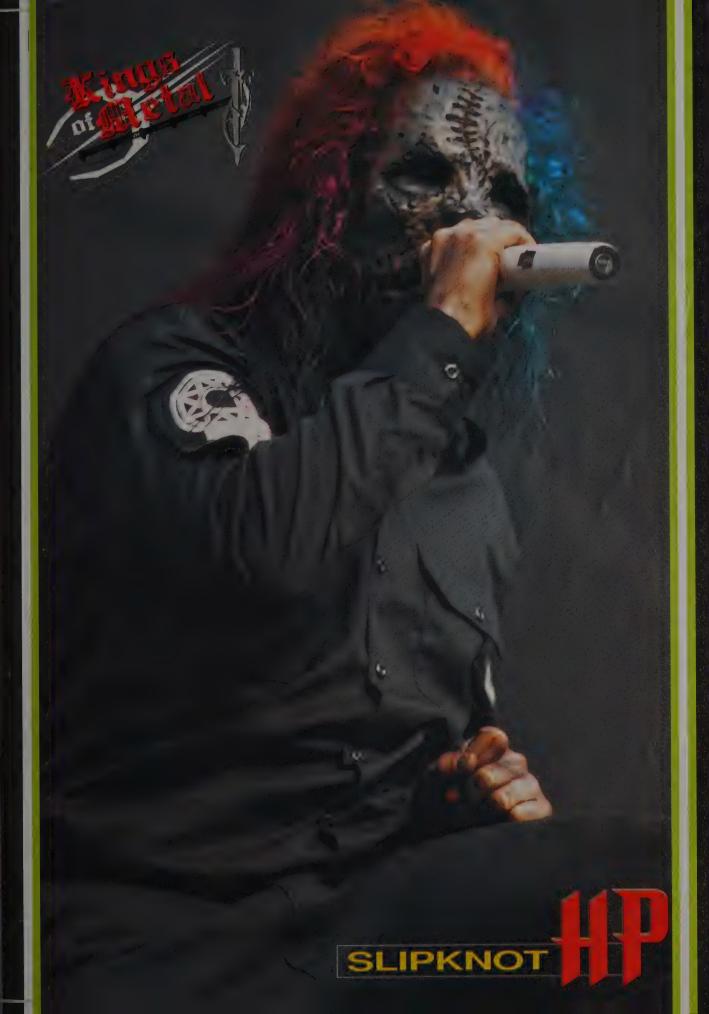
"We've been successful because we're not

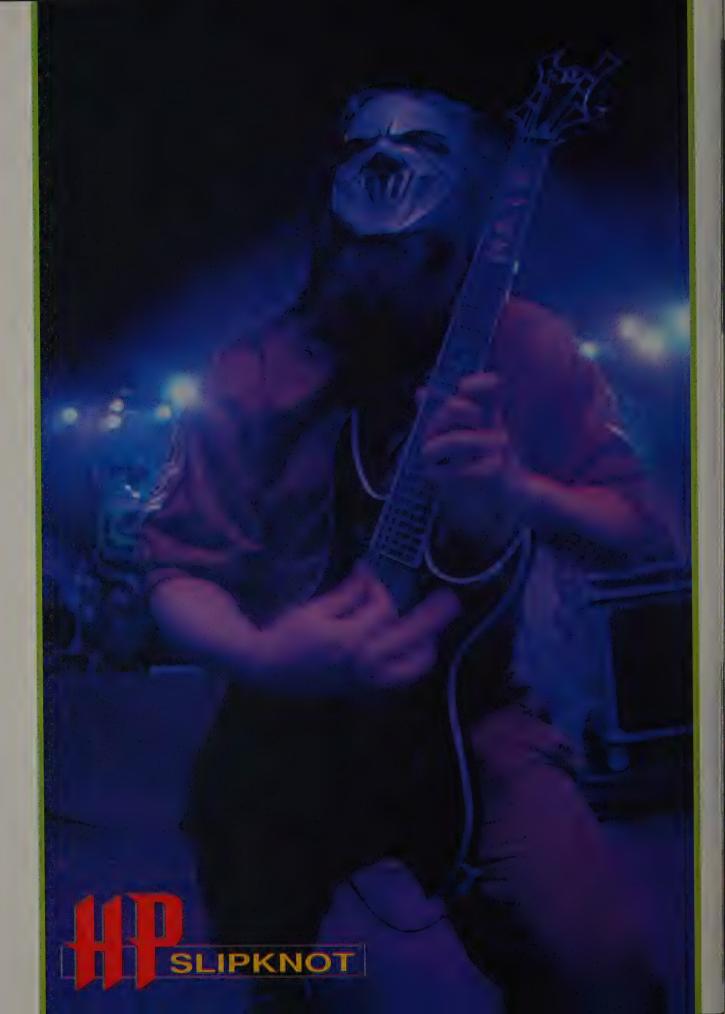
the one-dimensional band that some people think we are," Taylor said. "A lot of times people have gotten caught up in the heaviness of the music, or the way we look, and they tend to ignore other aspects of what we do. Sure we have our heavier influences like Slayer, but we also have our more progressive influences like Pink Floyd and King Crimson. The trick for us is to utilize them all without every

losing sight of what makes for a great Slipknot song. When they all comes together, it's

magic.

That "magic" will soon again be on display in the band's latest long-form video now scheduled for release in the spring of 2005. On this still-untitled collection, all of the Knot's new videos— from both Vermilion efforts to their ground breaking work on Duality- will be showcased, along with an abundance of never-before-seen special footage shot during the unit's year-long world tour in support of Vol. 3. While at the time of our most recent conversation Taylor still wasn't sure exactly what was going to comprise the full contents of the DVD (much of which falls under the domain of Crahan, the band's "creative director"), he did promise that it will "blow minds" in typical Slipknot fash-







"This DVD will show the growth we've enjoyed as a band," he said. "From the album, to the videos, to our stage show, it's all been an amazing growth process. That's one of the things that's blown me away. If you listen to what Mick and Jim have done on guitar on this album and on this tour, your jaw just drops! And Sid and Craig have come up with some really crazy stuff that makes the stage show really rock. Joey's percussion work is aweinspiring and the rhythms we produce are just so heavy that it's amazing. That's where a lot of the growth has come in. And on top of that, the song writing and the video production have both taken a major step ahead. They all work together to make this the strongest we've ever been as a band.

Ironically, the evolution that has become so central to Slipknot's on-going growth seems to be reflected in the style of masks that the band members wear. Starting off as little more than off-the-shelf Halloween left-overs, and now emerging as complex, state-of-the-art examples of artistic expression, Taylor is the first to admit that the band's visual side has attained a level of sophistication that he and his bandmates had never envisioned. With the start of the band's '05 U.S. tour, those masks have been creepier and scarier

than ever before... if such a thing is humanly possible.

"The masks have always been designed to change with time," he said. "It's not like Kiss where we're locked into a certain look. We never wanted it to be like that. We need to have them change, and recently they've evolved to reflect how we've evolved as people. There's a bit more depth to them in their design and execution. And the coveralls we're wearing have become much more streamlined. There's almost a militaristic feel to them now. They look really sharp!



PHOTO: FRAN STRINE

# Super Slipknot ou

o you think you know Slipknot? Do you think you're specially attuned to the crazed musical musings that make 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7 and 8 tick? Do you think you possess a direct link into the "hive" mentality that has taken this unit to the top of the rock pile time after time? Do you think you've scaled the top of the Knot metal mountain and can now look down upon all others who follow this Des Moines based breed? Well, if that's what you think, here's your chance to prove it! Take a shot at the 20 questions that comprise our Ultimate Slipknot Quiz. Then give yourself an honest grade (oh, we know you will!!)

All 20: C'mon Clown this ain't for you! 15-19: You are a true Knot Head 11-14: Be loud and be proud. 1-10: It's time to crank it to "11"

- 1. Before they joined forces in Slipknot, Shawn, Joey and Craig worked together in another band. Can you name that group?
- 2. Name the demo album that started Slipknot mania.
- 3. Name the two bands that share nightly billing with Slipknot on the Subliminal Verses Tour.
- 4. Name the band the opened for Slipknot on their 2002 European tour.
- 5. Who produced the first two Slipknot albums?
- 6. Who produced Vol 3: The Subliminal Verses?
- 7. Which band member sports a tattoo of an elephant's head?
- 8. What is the "hidden" track on the band's original demo disc?
- 9. What was the title of the band's 2002 DVD?
- 10. Name the Des Moines tattoo studio in which Knot members have had much of their skin work done.
- 11. What is the name of Joev's other band?
- 12. In what Western city was Paul Grey's living before returning to Des Moines to join Slipknot?
- 13. What is Corev's preferred nickname?
- 14. Name the two Knot songs on that appeared on Tattoo the Earth: The First Crusade.
- 15. What is the name of Shawn's "other" band?
- 16. Which Knot member customizes his coveralls most?
- 17. Which two band members often paint their fingernails
- 18. What is Joey's real first name?
- 19. Which word appears on most of Mick's guitars?
- 20. Which Knot member has used the name Star Scream during his DJ stints?

drumming easier, 17, Jim and Corey 18, Nathan 19, "Hate" 20, Sid 15. To My Surprise 16, Joey, who cuts off the sleeves to make 3. Lamb of God and Shadows Fall 4. American Head Charge 5. Ross Robinson 6. Rick Rubin 7. Shawn Crahan 8. Dogfish Rising. 9. **Disasterpieces** 10. The Skin Lab 11. the Murderdolls 12. Los Angeles 13. Faith 14. Liberate and Surfacing Motividious 2, Mate, Feed, Kill, Repeat

# **INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING**

BY MICHAEL SHORE

# PEAVEY

Do you believe in astrology? Well, whether you do or you don't, if you're a bass player, signs indicate it's a pretty safe bet that there may well be a Zodiac in your future - whether you're an Aquarius, a Scorpio, or whatever.

The Zodiac we're talking about - Zodiacs actually — are a pair of beautiful new bass guitars from one of our favorite manufacturers, Peavey, who we love because their basses, guitars, amps, drums, and more always manage to put the accent on both quality and value-for-money. And they've done it again with the Zodiac 4 USA and its five-string counterpart, the Zodiac 5 USA.

These are serious basses for serious players: playable, road-worthy, loaded with the kind of features professionals expect. Solid alder body with sculpted front and back contours and three-layer pickguard? Check (available in amber, tobacco burst, moonburst and "margarita" finishes). Stamped steel bridge with machined saddles for rock-solid tuning sta-

bility? Check. Eight-inch radius necks so you can really dig into standard 21-fret rosewood finger-boards on 34-inch scale necks? Check. All-chrome hardware including two master-volume controls, one master tone control, butterfly tuners and a Switchcraft jack? Check, check, check. Hot-sounding Alnico pickups? Check - one P-style and one J-style on the Zodiac 4 USA, and two J-style on the Zodiac 5.

Peavey also has a serious new guitar amp which, like the Zodiacs, comes in near the top of its price-point line: the Penta, so named because its switchable EQ and gain voicings give it no less than 5 different musical personalities, all in one single-channel tube-driven amp. The voicings are accessible by a rotary knob to switch between a set of icons: the "star" is a classic British

plexi voice, the "Bull" a modified Brit voice with lots of extra gain and a tighter low-end, the "Tree" is a thicker Brit voice with looser attack and a bit more gain, "Mudflap Girl" is super-high-gain with more responsive EQ and power-amp section, and "Cactus" is fat and clean. The Penta pumps 140 watts RMS into 16, 8 or 4 ohms with four matched EL34 power tubes and four 12AX7 tubes, plugged into ceramic sockets. It's got Gain, Master Volume and Presence controls as well as 3-band EQ, and its companion 412 cabinet has four 12-inch rear-mounted speakers, 11-ply birch baffle and "poplar sides. The Penta lists for \$1499.99 and the 412 for \$999.99 - like we said, serious stuff.

And finally, Peavey — whose 13-year designing/marketing partnership with Edward Van Halen recently came to an end — is also replacing the Van Halen-designed Wolfgang guitars and 5150 amps with the new Carina

guitars and 6505 amps. "Carina" means "beautiful" in Italian and beautiful these instrumens are - also unusually comfortable to play and consistent from model-to-model thanks especially to computer-designed

necks. The 6505 name is based on the fact that Peavey was established in 1965. With both models Peavey pledges to continue the standard of excellence that saw the Wolfgang and 5150 models become staples of modern rock, used and endorsed by everyone from Ted Nugent and 3 Doors Down to Atrevu and God Forbid.

> Need to know more? Visit www.peavey.com online!



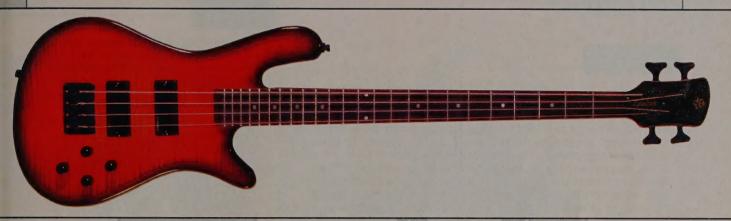




# A GUIDE TO THE LATEST GEAR

# **SPECTOR BASS**

Spector's new Performer 4 DLX bass has a genuine figured maple top over a basswood body, bolt-on rock maple neck, 24-fret rosewood fingerboard, EMG humbucking pickups, dual volume and tone controls, and black-plated hardware including locking bridge and enclosed tuners. Available in matte or "holofinish" black, cherry red, blue, and honeyburst finishes, it's a heck of a lot of bass for only \$549 list. For more info check out www.spectorguitar.com online.



# **MAPEX M-BIRCH DRUMS**

Mapex's new M-Birch Series drums make use of the lighter, brighter (than the usual maple) birch wood in their shells, for amazing attack and clarity and a distinctive tone all their own. The drums aren't ALL birch - they also have a maple veneer exterior finished in one of five high-gloss lacquer colors (cherry red, emerald green, honey amber, purple and sapphire) for a classy traditional look. Kits, with toms ranging from 10 to 16 inch diameter, come in 5-piece standard, 6-piece studio, 5-piece fusion, 5-piece "fusionease" and 5-piece jazz configurations, and through this year any 5-piece kit gets you a free matching 8-inch tom! The 5-piece kits list for \$1199.99 and the 6-piece set for \$1499.99 - superb value! For more info on these and the rest of Mapex's wide range of terrific drums and hardware, head online to www mapexdrums com.



# INSTRUMENT



Regal Tip, one of the top names in drumstick and THE pioneer in nylon-tipped sticks, has expanded its popular "E" Series of sticks - literally! The "E" Series is the only stick that marries the special durability and feel of nylon tips with the traditional dark wood sound that iazz drummers have always loved. It does this chiefly through an innovative ridged-circumference tip - it's kinda like corduroy, or those porcelain power-line insulators on telephone poles, or art-deco building details, or, well just check out the accompanying photo! The new "E" Series Wide sticks come in Jazz. 7A, 5A and 5B sizes and exactly duplicate the size, taper and tip dimensions of their wood-tip counterparts (yes, Regal Tip also makes terrific all-wood sticks too!). The original "E" Series nylon tips had a longer, thinner taper than their corresponding wood versions. For more on these and Regal Tip's many, many, many other sticks, brushes, mallets, beaters, etc., head online to www.re!galtip.com.

Speaking of jazz-based stick sounds. Vater's new Splashstick Lite offers yet another in the ever-increasing range of softer sound colors between sticks and brushes - packing sticklike punch into the more delicate brush sound. Vater's "Whips" and "Acousticks" do it by bundling polybristles or polymer-wrapped thin wood dowels for a "semi-solid" stick, and Splashsticks do a similar thing in their own distinctive way, with 19 wood dowels bundled together for that warm 'n' fuzzy brush effect that still has a solid "crack" and can do rimshots. The new Splastick Lite uses smaller-diameter dowels for a lighter weight and sound and a thinner grip. For more info on these and Vater's wide range of "normal" sticks, mallets, accessories, etc., visit www.vater.com.online.



# PR MARK

Finally, speaking of going online: another drumstick giant, Pro-Mark, has redesigned its website with easier navigation, more user-friendly graphics, quicker loading, and other improvements. Why? For the best reason of all: as Pro-Mark Director of Sales and Marketing Pat Brown says, "We spent a lot of time listening to suggestions and recommendations made by visitors to our old site, and have implemented many of them in the new site." Go there and see for yourself, at www.promark.com <a href="http://www.promark.com">http://www.promark.com</a> — and do check out their enormous range of sticks, brushes, brush-stick hybrids, mallets, etc...including a new item relating to the beautiful woman prominently pictured in the website homepage image you see here: Evelyn Glennie, the brilliant, world-renowned classical percussion virtuoso who happens to be seriously deaf. That's right, deaf - and she's one HELL of a player, usually performing barefoot to "hear" the vibrations of other musicians through her feet. Her new EG-XS mallets are mainly intended for use on marimbas, which may be her speciality instrument, though she's also a monster on everything from drums to gongs to woodblocks to you-name it. She and marimbas have not much to do with the kind of music we usually cover here - but she's such a remarkable human being, never mind a killer musician, that you to do with the kind of music we usually cover here - but she's such a remarkable human being, never mind a killer musician, that you and anyone else would do well to be aware of her. We bet Slayer drummer Dave Lombardo, who made a fascinating album of

# MIKE BORDIN and Yamaha Drums

و علام Sympto Copper Siero Drin

Milke's Drum Jack.
Chris (Facilie) Cost

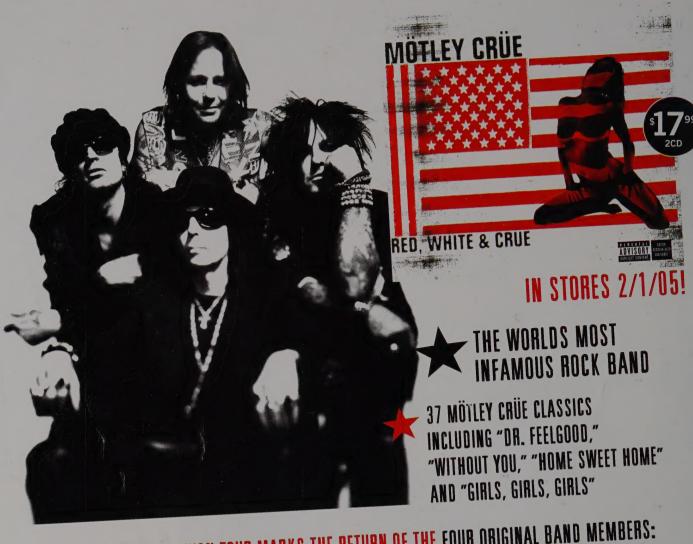
Mike's Yamalia Recording Custom Kit

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Mike. Drummer. OZZV

BORDIN'S CHOICE

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